



Reading Material for ASHA



BOOK No-1



asha



Ministry of Health and
Family Welfare
Government of India

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SEPTEMBER, 2005



Ministry of Health and
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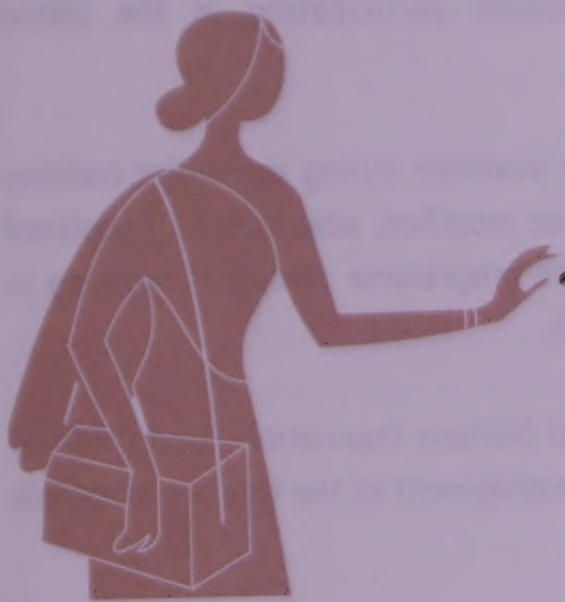
Shelma Narayan
ASHA Meeting Group.



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Preface

The National Rural Health Mission launched on 12th April 2005, seeks to provide effective, efficient and affordable health care to rural population in eighteen states with weak public health indicators.

One of the key components of the mission is creating a band of female health volunteers, appropriately named "Accredited Social Health Activist" (ASHA) in each village within the identified States. These ASHAs would act as a 'bridge' between the rural people and health service outlets and would play a central role in achieving national health and population policy goals.

ASHAs are to be selected by the community, from within the community. They would work on a voluntary basis, although compensation would be provided to them for specific activities and services. ASHA guidelines clearly lay down the accountability mechanisms. The induction training for ASHA would be completed in 23 days spread in five rounds over a period of 12 months, to be followed by periodic re-training for about two days once every alternate month.

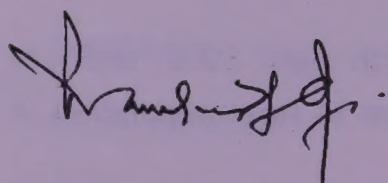
Equipping ASHAs with knowledge and skills required to perform the assigned roles will be a crucial element in the programme. The training programme for

ASHAs needs to be organised closer to communities. A major challenge will be to sustain the interest of selected women participating in the initial training programme.

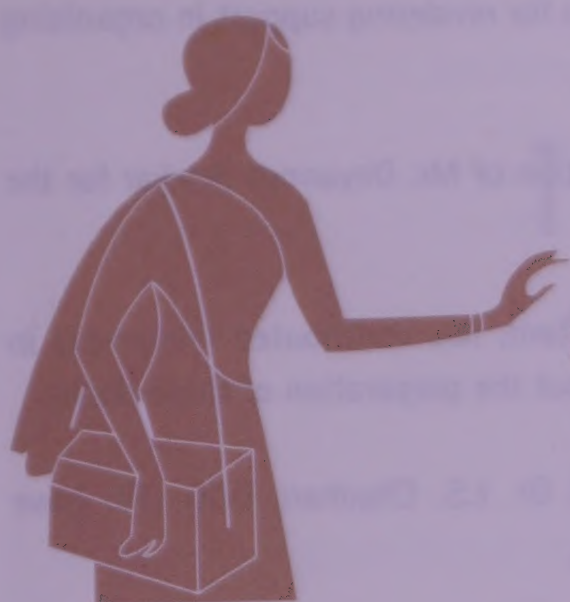
This book is first in the series, to be made available during the entire training period. Written in simple language, it can be modified, adapted and translated by respective States as per their needs. The programme managers working in NGO settings may also like to use this book.

I take this opportunity to thank the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for providing technical assistance for the development of the training materials to be used in the ASHA programme.

30th June 2005



Prasanna Hota
Secretary, Health & Family Welfare
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New Delhi



Acknowledgement

The conceptualization, compilation, editing and production of the modular books to be used for pre-deployment and also on job-training of ASHAs, has been a collective effort for all. Nevertheless, constant support and sustained guidance at all the stages of the work, has been available from Shri. Prasanna Hota, Secretary, Smt. S. Jalaja, Additional Secretary, Shri. B.P. Sharma, Joint Secretary and Smt. Shubhra Singh, Director of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India. I wish to convey my sincere gratitude to them for the same.

The contribution the Department of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) towards mainstreaming various popular remedies advocated for prevailing common ailments in Indian communities, offers an excellent opportunity for the ASHAs to perform their duties efficiently and deserves commendations.

Prof. N.K. Sethi, Director, National Institute of Health and Family Welfare, along with his senior faculty colleagues, contributed immensely in enhancing the educational and technical quality of the work.

Dr. Shyam Ashtekar, Consultant and Dr. Dinesh Agarwal, Technical Advisor (Reproductive Health), UNFPA, provided substantive assistance in

preparation of the reading material for ASHA. Mrs. Nalini Srivastava, Project Secretary, UNFPA deserves special thanks for rendering support in organising the reading material.

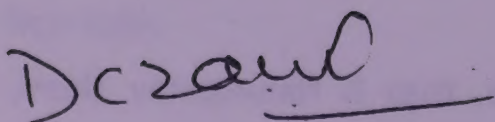
I would like to acknowledge the contribution of Mr. Dnyanesh Belekar for the illustrations used in the book.

Dr. Pramod Samantaray, National Consultant, has contributed immensely in carefully going through the text, throughout the preparation of these books.

Dr. V.K. Manchanda, DDG (MH/CH) and Dr. L.S. Chauhan, DDG (TB) have provided technical support throughout.

I would also like to place on record my gratitude for the hard labour and sincere efforts put in by my colleagues, Dr. Manoj Kumar, Assistant Commissioner (Trg.), Mrs. Mridula Das, ADG (N) and Dr. H. Bhushan, Assistant Commissioner (MH), in shaping the modules. I gratefully acknowledge the secretarial assistance provided by Shri Harish Rao and Shri Sachin Kumar in putting together the document.

28th June 2005



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1

National Rural Health Mission- The Vision

The National Rural Health Mission (2005-12) seeks to provide effective health care to rural population throughout the country, with a special focus on States that have weak public health indicators and/or weak infrastructure.

The Mission is an articulation of the commitment of the Government to raise public spending on health from 0.9% of the GDP to 2-3% of GDP.

It aims to undertake a reform correction of the health system to enable it to effectively handle increased allocations as promised under the National Common Minimum Programme, and promote policies that strengthen public health management and service delivery in the country.

It has as its key components the provision of a female health activist in each village; a village health plan prepared through a local team headed by the Health and Sanitation Committee of the Panchayat; strengthening of the rural hospital for effective curative care; making the system measurable and accountable to the community through the Indian Public Health

Standards (IPHS); integration of vertical health and family welfare programmes and funds for optimal utilization of funds and infrastructure and strengthening delivery of primary healthcare.

It seeks to revitalize local health traditions and mainstream AYUSH into the public health system.

It aims at effective integration of health concerns with determinants of health like sanitation & hygiene, nutrition and safe drinking water through a district plan for health.

It seeks a decentralization of programmes for district management of health.

It seeks to address the inter-state and inter-district disparities, especially among the 18 high focus States, including unmet needs for public health infrastructure.

It shall define time-bound goals and report publicly on their progress.

It seeks to improve access of rural people, especially poor women and children, to equitable, affordable, accountable and effective primary healthcare.



2

Introduction: The ASHA Learning Programme

The learning programme for ASHA is based on principles of adult learning. After taking up and completing this learning programme, you will be equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively perform the tasks and activities expected from you.

This learning programme is designed to be conducted in five phases. This will be completed in 23 days spread over one year. Each ASHA will receive reference material in form of books during the learning programme.

There are 19 themes to be covered in the 23-day learning programme. These are listed in the chart given on page 5. Each theme has some lessons. Each lesson is complete in itself. You will learn the 19 themes, lesson by lesson during each learning exposure. Some themes with fewer lessons may not spread over all five learning exposures. The reading material specific to each lesson and themes has been organized in the form of books. You have in your hands book no 1. Similarly, books no. 2, 3, 4 and 5 will be available in the subsequent learning exposures.

Each lesson is about 2-3 pages, and can be completed in half an hour. In each lesson, you have some information, and some skills to learn. At the end there are some points to think about. Your facilitators will help and encourage you to find out the solutions of these issues. For skills, you will have the opportunity of hands-on experience or demonstrations, to be organized by the facilitators. During the sessions, you can practice some skills.

So after the first learning exposure of seven days, you would have acquired preliminary knowledge on most themes. You are supposed to take a simple assessment after each exposure. These assessments will help in making appropriate changes if required.

After completion of the first exposure, you will be working in the village and along with Nurse *didi*, the Anganwadi *behen*, Self Help Group (SHG) members and the male MPW worker, you will have some assignments to do in the village, like water disinfection, or attending the ANC clinic/health day. Your facilitators will give these assignments to you after each exposure. You will keep record of assignments given to you and share in the next exposure.

Book number 1 is simple enough to understand for even 4th-5th standard educated women. As we move on to the other books, lessons will be focused on slightly more complex issues. The learning programme is participatory. You learn, and your facilitators help you to learn. You should ask questions and seek solutions to likely problems you may anticipate during your work in the village.

Our best wishes are with you, to serve the village health care needs!

DISTRIBUTION OF LESSONS IN THE ASHA TRAINING BOOKS AS PER THEMES

THEMES	BOOK 1	BOOK 2	BOOK 3	BOOK 4	BOOK 5
Introduction, roles, tasks	1. My seven tasks	Village health plan	Escorting to a hospital births and deaths	Records and reports: an outbreak	Reporting
Being healthy- determinants of health	2. Staying healthy 3. Personal hygiene	Social determinants of health	Family health: role of men	_____	Utilization of health services
Water-sanitation, environment	4. Water safety at home 5. Disposal of waste water -/soak pit-Kgarden	Sanitary latrines	How to protect water sources in village	Smokeless chulah	Rodents: health hazards
Nutrition & malnutrition	6. Our Health depends on food we eat	Night blindness and anaemia	Iodine deficiency disorders	Malnutrition and care of malnourished children	Food taboos and food fads Food sanitation
Knowing ourselves- Human biology	7. Body mapping/ overview organs	Body-Systems Physiology of Reproduction	Gastro intestinal system	Respiratory system	Cardio-vascular system
Community, gender, - PRI, rights	8. Women and health-	Gram panchayat/ Gramsa bha/Functions	PNDT act	Violence against women	Rights/ responsibilities of a client
Adolescent health	_____	Healthy adolescents: Community resource	Nutritional needs of adolescent girls	Teenage pregnancy	_____
Communication	9. Organising a group meeting`	How to organize a <i>prabhat pheri</i> with school children	Counselling	_____	Village contact drive
Health services, Govt, Pvt, social marketing	10. Know health services 11. Anganwadi centre 12. Village birth attendant	CHC/Rural hospital/District hospital	Private doctors/RMPs	Social marketing	Depot holder
Illness, causes & healing, remedies	13. Illness and healing 14. Using remedies	Immunity,	Rational drugs	_____	_____
AYUSH/herbal medicines	15. Home remedies	Some AYUSH medicines	Some AYUSH medicines	Fertility awareness	Healing without drugs
Contraceptive methods	16. Preventing unwanted pregnancies 17. Condoms	Oral contraceptive pills and ECPs	IUDs	Male sterilization	Female sterilization
Preventing unwanted childbirth	_____	MTP	Unsafe abortions	_____	_____

Contd...

DISTRIBUTION OF LESSONS IN THE ASHA TRAINING BOOKS AS PER THEMES

THEMES	BOOK 1	BOOK 2	BOOK 3	BOOK 4	BOOK 5
Pregnancy, birth, post-natal care	18. Registration of pregnant women 19. Janani Suraksha Yojana	ANC care	Process of childbirth, danger signs	C section and blood transfusion	Post-natal care
Genital Infections and HIV/AIDS	20. HIV AIDS	Discharge in women	Discharges in men	Infertility	VCTC
Child health	21. Breast feeding 22. Infant Nutrition 23. Immunization 24. Diarrhoea	Essential newborn care	Acute Respiratory Infections	Measles	Worm infestations
Common medical problems	25. Aches and pain	Wound care	Multiple boils	Ear problems	Upper respiratory tract infections
National Health Programmes	26. TB	Malaria	Leprosy	National Blindness Control Programme	Vector control Warning signs of cancer
Accidents & first aid	27. Snake bite	Dog bite	Burns Heat Strokes	Thrasher Injury, Fractures	Poisoning, Drowning



3

ASHA:

My Eight Tasks

Knowing our village people

Improving the health status of our people requires teamwork. You require everyone's participation - the people, the nurse, the anganwadi, the Dai, the schoolteachers and the village Panchayat. You also need the help of a doctor. You will need to work with all of these people so that people villagers remain healthy.

Village people are not as rich as city people. They have to face many difficulties. They depend on land and farming. Some of them also work as wage labourers in nearby towns. In many villages, rearing cattle is a source of income. Most farmers depend upon rains. Many work as artisans. They work hard to make a living.

Some people are too poor. They are grouped as below poverty line (BPL) as per Government criteria. Often they come from scheduled castes, tribes and other marginalized groups. Families belonging to BPL are eligible for special benefits under government schemes. A village may have different settlements for different castes.

Everyone needs health care. Yet some groups of people are more vulnerable to sickness. The poor people, the women, the children and adolescents and old people need health care more often. Their health needs are not adequately met. They have little or no money. At times they have to take loans at very high

interest rates to get admission in hospitals or to buy medicines for their kids. Your role is to guide them to get good care in time, that is affordable too.

Village people have a practical sense of solving problems with simple resources. Thus they should be involved in village health planning to assess health needs and also help in selecting appropriate solutions to address the common problems.

Schools, fair price shops, water, electricity, seeds, fertilizers, credit, animal care, bus/jeep, roads, employment, forest produce, common grazing grounds, post-office, haat—we need all these services in the village. Health care is just one more. It is not isolated, but part of the whole life of the village. As ASHA, you shall do your best to help your own people in their struggle for health and share joys of life. People have expectations from you. In the following pages, you will learn about your specific tasks to be undertaken by you as ASHA.

Village Health Plan

You should participate in village health planning and help nurse *didi*, anganwadi *behen*, and Panchayat members. This will be the foundation of all health work in the village. Village health planning helps us to select important health issues and make a work plan to solve them. Everybody's participation is necessary. NGO workers, school teachers and representatives of self-help groups will also help in micro planning. You should ensure that marginalized population groups such as scheduled castes, tribes, minorities and women are adequately involved in the planning process. When people participate in planning, they also help in offering solutions and carrying out the tasks.

Most villages will have a health and sanitation committee. The committee members take initiative for the development of village health plans. Village health planning needs some facilitators. They bring people together, activate them to think and plan with people, map out problems and encourage solutions. Depending on the availability some NGOs workers can provide facilitation. Teachers can also help you. You should work proactively with the anganwadi *behen* and nurse *didi* to decide on the venue and timings for the planning meeting.

Village health plans provide a framework for health-related actions. Many actions lead to improvement of health. Village planning is a community approach to solve problems. You will learn more about it in the subsequent exposures of our learning programme.

Example: Development of a plan for tackling sanitation problem in a village.

Let village teachers, nurse *didi*, Anganwadi *behen*, artisans, Panchayat members and NGO workers meet and form a core group. You will be one of the members of this group.

This group should go around the village observing village sanitation and other problems. You may involve students in a village rally so as to raise awareness of sanitation issues. Inform them about the time and venue of planning meeting. Songs and street plays also invite the attention of the people.

Then gather in a central place open to all. Draw a village map on a big paper or a wall. Ask the people to mark their house in the map using tamarind seeds and small stones etc. Map waste water cesspools in the village. Discuss the problems. The village planning may take 2-3 days also.

Ask people about the sources of waste water flowing in the street or in cesspools. Mark houses having fever cases. The nurse *didi*, and the anganwadi *behen* and MPW will check the houses. They will discuss about malaria with the villagers and talk of solutions. Think of ways to eliminate breeding sites for mosquitoes. You can handle more problems in the same meeting. Think of handling the problem of malnutrition amongst children in your village and discuss how such exercises can be useful.

Communication for health behaviour change

Health information and communication is as important than pills and injections. Proper information and advice helps people to avoid diseases and stay healthy.

Health information is a lasting asset. Currently villagers, especially poor women, men and adolescents do not have access to information on health issues. You can fill this gap and act as a local resource person on health issues. Availability of information will trigger changes in health promoting behaviours and adoption of healthy practices.

- We should select issues close to people's hearts and needs. Attend to more important problems first.
- See what people already know and build on the existing knowledge base.
- Understand the problems from their point of view also.

- Share health information with them and look for possible solutions.
- Find effective ways of how people learn to change their ways.
- Use any of these occasions for Behaviour Change Communication (BCC): group discussion, personal discussion, demonstrations, village meetings, clinic contacts, exhibition, camps, Self Help Group (SHG) meetings, meetings of adolescents, religious gatherings, *haat-bazaar* days etc.
- Use aids for BCC: Chitrakatha, flip charts, booklets, posters, *prabhat pheris*, songs, models, puppet shows, street plays etc.
- Look for innovative methods in communication. For instance, one voluntary organization painted all the bulls in the village with health slogans on the traditional *bail-puja* day. The moving slogans stayed for weeks.
- Assess impact of BCC efforts. Has it changed how people think? Has it changed the way they do things? Has it improved utilization of health services?
- Enable people to change their behaviour, such as by the construction of sanitary latrines in their house.

And remember all advice is good if you can follow it in similar situations. You will learn more about BCC in this programme.

Linkages with AWW, TBA, ANM, MPW

During your work, you need support of other persons engaged in health-related activities

In the village, we have *Anganwadi*, the *Dai* and some other healers. We will learn more about them soon.

The Anganwadi Worker (AWW)

Anganwadi is for village children under six years. They get supplementary feeds in the *Anganwadi* Centre (AWC). The AW *behen* weighs children regularly and keeps growth cards. As ASHA, we can work with the AW *behen* and nurse *didi* on child health activities, and assist her in organising fixed monthly "Health Days". They also provide supplementary food for pregnant women.

The Village Dai

The village *Dai* helps in childbirth. She conducts childbirth and attends to the newborn. She gets training and a kit for clean childbirth from the Primary Health Centre/Sub Centre (PHC/SC).

Other Healers

The *Village Vaid* uses herbal medicines. He may have some knowledge of herbs and some Ayurvedic remedies. Some cures may be good. Faith healers practice cures with help of *mantras* and mind techniques. They are also called "*Bhopas*" and "*Ojhas*" in some communities. People go to them for some types of illnesses. The advice given by them may be of doubtful nature.

The nurse *dididi* (ANM)

The nurse *dididi* is very important for all our work. She works from the health sub-centre. She visits 5-6 villages and hamlets in turns. Her work includes immunization, care of mother and child, childbirth, contraceptive services, some medical aid etc.

The *Swasthya Karmi* (Male worker)

He also helps the nurse *dididi* in her work. He gives her treatment for fever, medicine for TB and malaria. He also helps in controlling outbreak of diseases in the village.

Counselling

People often need help to find solutions to their health problems. Here are some health-related issues you can offer help with:

- Adolescent health
- Pregnancy and childbirth
- Abortion,
- Childlessness
- Child health and nutrition
- Immunization
- Unmet needs of contraception
- Intimate problems like sexually transmitted infections/AIDS.
- Chronic ailments like cancers, TB, leprosy,
- Choosing simple health care options

Yes, you may not know about these problems fully. But you can certainly help by telling people where to go. You may also explain to them what kinds of solutions are available in a given situation. You may also follow up with them and find out how they are using the help. If there are any problems, you can suggest alternative ways.

Counselling needs knowledge of the subject. Knowledge grows with time and more reading and discussing. Counselling also needs skills about talking with different persons—men and women, young and old etc., understanding their viewpoints. It calls for sensitivity and empathy.

Counselling also needs motivating skills. Different problems involve different solutions. Therefore motivating becomes necessary. We often do it in the family. This is how we arrive at a decision after weighing the pros and cons of several alternatives.

You can do some effective counselling after some experience.

Escorting patients to a hospital

Many people need to go to a town or city hospital for better care. They feel lost and helpless in such situations. Often, they face difficulties in such situations. Also somebody from the family has to stay back to look after the children and cattle, farm work etc. They often need you to accompany them.

You can ensure that needy people get the right help. You also can help in deciding to go to the PHC, Community Health Centre (CHC) or the district hospital. If the CHC is far away, people may choose to go to other suitable private or trust hospitals. In some emergency situations (like bleeding during or immediately after birth), time is precious. Situations that need escorting are:

- Childbirth and immediately after childbirth; difficulties during pregnancy and childbirth.
- Abortion and bleeding.
- A seriously sick child.
- A very sick person, who suffers from brain malaria or heat stroke.
- Someone wants to know about his/her TB or suspects HIV.
- Accidents like snake bite, burns, serious injury, poisoning, drowning.
- Clients for accepting IUD or sterilization.

You need to have necessary information and skills

Knowledge about which hospital to take them to. What is the distance?

Help the family in decision-making. You need to decide with the family about where to go.

Arranging transport with the help of the villagers

Sending a message to the hospital. (Learn to use a telephone if available).

Escorting helps

Good and timely first aid and escorting can save lives and reduce harm. It also improves your relation with the families and enhances your credibility in the village. This will make your linkages with the hospital.

Primary medical care

People need curative care for many health problems. We have to offer relevant, effective primary medical care to the needy. Good primary medical care helps to:

- Save time and money for families.
- Reduce possible damage to health and life threatening complications.
- Make easy many of your health tasks in the village so that people value your service.

Your role is:

- Treat all simple illnesses (like coughs and colds) with simple cures. Many health problems are simple in nature.
- Help in moderate illnesses (like diarrhoea), watch for early signs of dangers and refer to a hospital if necessary.
- Facilitate early detection of early serious chronic illness (like TB and cancer) and refer. This is great help you can do.
- Ensure proper first aid in accidents before referral/escorting.
- Depot holder for common health care commodities.

However you should be careful about the following points:

- Do only what you know surely. Ask for help when necessary.
- Use only medicines and care advised in this programme.
- Do not wait for cure for more than two days in any illness you are not sure of.
- Explain side effects of drugs you use.
- Explain possible risks in some illnesses (like childhood ARI).
- Keep drug stocks ready and safe, away from reach of children.

Act as depot holders

She will also act as depot holder for essential provisions being made available to every habitation like oral rehydration solution (ORS), Iron Folic Acid (IFA) tablets, Chloroquine, Disposable Delivery kits (DDK), oral pills and condoms etc. A drug kit will be provided to you. Contents of the kits will be based on the recommendations of the expert/technical advisory group set up by the Government of India, including both AYUSH and allopathic formulations.

Records and registration

- Register every birth/still birth with the *gram Panchayat* within 14 days.
- Register every death with the *gram Panchayat* in 7 days.
- Keep a record of your work in ASHA register/diary.
- Keep a diary for noting your experiences, difficulties and thoughts.
- Tally your records with records at *Anganwadi* and sub centres and meetings.

If you notice that the number of girls born in your village is much less than boys, be alert as it may be due to the "Sex Selective Abortions". You will learn later as what will be your role in preventing sex selection of the foetus.

In case of unusual occurrence of any disease in your village, you need to inform the concerned health authority i.e. in charge of local PHC.



4

Staying Healthy

A saying on health

Pehla such Nirogi Kaya is one of the sayings. It means a healthy body is the most important pleasure of life.

Good health leads to productive, happy and a long life. Both the body and mind need to be healthy. And our relation with society should also be healthy. People often think health is linked to medicines, doctors and hospitals only. This is not always true.

Hospitals and doctors are necessary when we fall sick. But first we need to take care of our body. You can prevent diseases, promote health and prolong life.

We say *Aarogyam dhansampada*. This means health is real wealth. Health makes us more productive, and ill health causes losses. Ill health keeps us away from work and livelihood. Ill health means spending on doctors and medicines. In villages, people often take loans or sell goats and cattle to pay for hospital expenses. The money people spend on tobacco and liquor also causes ill health. Following health practices protect our wealth and increase productivity.

In this lesson we will learn about

What is health?

What make us healthy?

What leads to ill health?

How health and ill health assessed?

How to remain healthy?

Some parental gifts make part of one's health. Like body features, frame, height, weight, looks, skin and colour, some mental traits etc. Sometimes we even get some health problems linked to parental traits. We can avoid marriage among blood relatives to avoid some of these inborn defects.



Many social and economic factors also cause ill health. Poverty is the root cause of many sicknesses. Low purchasing power limits access to adequate amount of food and balanced diet. Women suffer from sicknesses during the process of giving birth to a baby.

Also health care utilization is impacted adversely on account of poverty. Ignorance also contributes to sickness. Certain traditional practices are harmful. You should try to know about these traditional practices in your village.

A lot of health depends upon factors like

- Clean drinking water, clean air.
- Balanced diet.
- Healthy personal habits.
- Healthy home and surroundings.
- Healthy working conditions.
- Supportive family, friends and society.
- Staying away from vices like alcohol, tobacco, multiple partners etc.

Timely use of health services like immunization, birth spacing, mosquito bed nets etc is also necessary for health. If we fall ill, seeking treatment early is very important in several illnesses. Examples are TB, cancer, high blood pressure, pneumonia, snake bite etc. Late action may harm. Every hour counts in such situations.

To stay healthy, we need to adopt healthy practices, and use health services in time.

How to assess health and ill health

We often say that one looks healthier than someone else. Healthiness shows up in happiness. But we often use 'measures' for health.

When selecting young men/women for police or army, parameters such as height, weight, chest circumference etc are used. We also use several tests (eyes, blood, urine etc) to test assess health of an individual.

We can talk of ill health in similar ways. We relate ill health to illnesses—cough, fever, diarrhoea, TB, polio, drunkenness etc. At the level of community we use similar words. For instance, we say there are more people with fever this year than the last year, or fewer people with diarrhoea or no case of AIDS in this village. Or more infants dying in this village as compared to other villages.

Some examples of how we discuss health and ill health in the village:

- This year we have more/fewer fevers in the village.
- How many TB patients in the village?
- Mother and child deaths in the village in last year.
- Number of underweight babies in the village.
- Number of teenage girls giving birth to babies.
- Number of smokers and alcoholics in village.
- Mental attributes—are people happy, number of suicides etc.

You can make our own checklist based on our situation and needs. A comparison tells us if our village has better health than the last year or the next village.

Think about this:

- Why people have to take a loan for getting treatment in hospitals?
- Why women feel hesitant to talk about their health problems with male doctors?
- Why people keep on waiting for days and months for seeking treatment?



5

Personal Hygiene



In this lesson we will learn about

Importance of personal cleanliness viz. hand washing, cleaning teeth, nail cutting, daily bath, clean clothes, footwear, hair-care.

Cleanliness and health

Cleanliness is next to Godliness. Many illnesses spread due to lack of cleanliness. Illnesses like diarrhoea, dysentery, cholera, worms, typhoid, skin infections, louse infestations and dental problems etc are examples.

Toilet practices

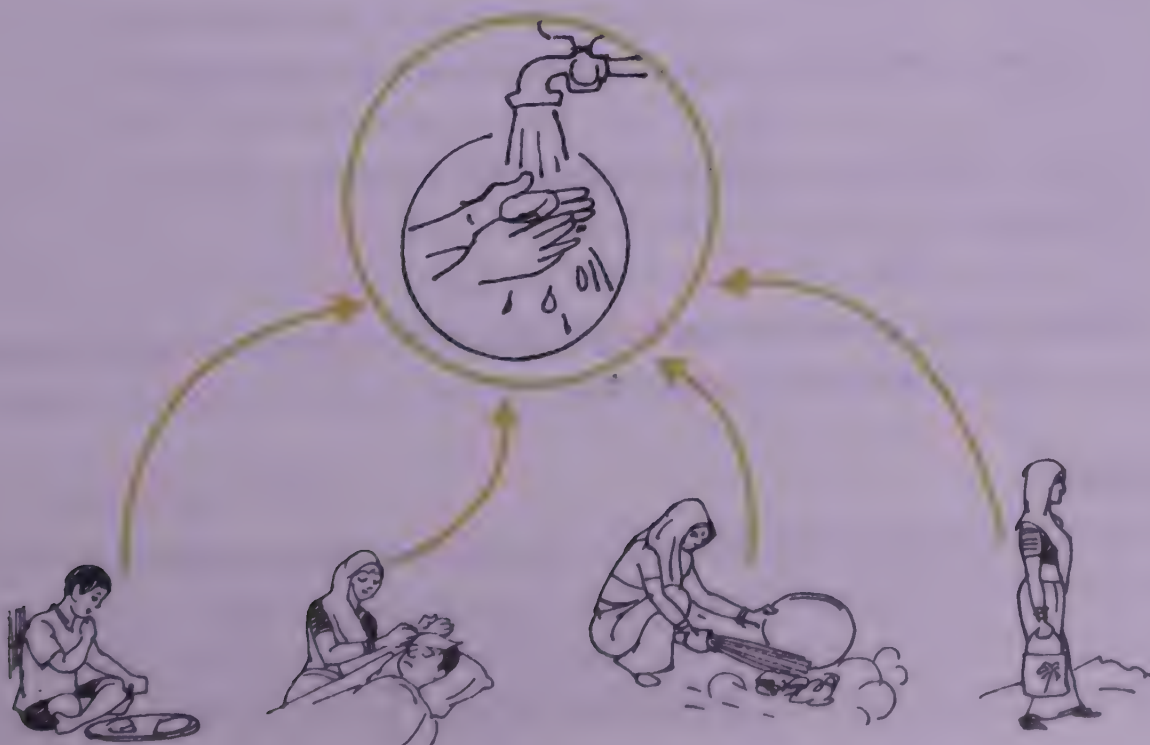
In India many people go to open fields for defecation. You need to help them in getting sanitary latrines installed. These are convenient for young girls, women, aged, sick person and children who often find it difficult to go to fields. You will get more information about construction of sanitary latrines from the block Panchayat office. After defecation, most use water-wash for anal clean up. This soils the hand with germs. It is necessary to wash the hands thoroughly after this, with soap or ash. Some people use paper or leaves of some trees for anal clean up. This may be actually healthier as it avoids soiling of hands with germs.

Hand wash

Many diseases such as diarrhoea, typhoid etc are caused due to germs present on dirty hands. You should ensure that your hands are clean, especially before eating any food. Wash your hands with plain water first and then with soap and see the difference in wash water. You will appreciate the difference. After going to the toilet and before having meal, we must wash our hands thoroughly.

Wash the hands with a lot of water first. Apply soap or ashes and rub on the hands particularly the nails, tip of the fingers and between them. Again, pour water. Dry it with a clean piece of cloth or napkin.

Cutting nails regularly removes space for collection of dirt. Long nails may be fashionable but also hide germs, if not properly cleaned.



Our mouth and teeth

Our teeth remain healthy if we clean them everyday. Food particles collect in the tooth gaps. This leads to tooth problems and swollen gums.

We must have a good mouthwash after each meal. This will remove food particles and prevent the problems of tooth and gums. Just imagine what happens to a utensil, which was used for cooking food last night and not cleaned overnight. It stinks badly. Similarly if we don't clean our mouth after meals it will also stink. Never have a bed-tea without mouthwash.

Discourage use of raw or burnt tobacco for cleaning teeth. That causes stains. Smoking also makes teeth dirty.

Use of ash is good, but it cannot clean the gaps.

Regular tooth brushing will remove the plaque

Use a soft bristled brush. Be sure it is the right size (a smaller is better than a big one).

Place the brush angled to the teeth. Brush the teeth toward the gums. Brush very gently so that any plaque growing under the gum will be removed. Brush the outside, the tongue side and the chewing surfaces of your teeth. Brushing tongue will make your breath odourless. Stale food and germs can collect on your tongue and cause bad breath. Brush at least twice every day, before and after sleep. This would prevent plaque formation.

Brushing too vigorously or using a hard brush may cause damage to gums.

Change the brush if the bristles look spread out. A worn out toothbrush will not clean our teeth.

Toothpaste is not always necessary for brushing. Therefore brushing is a cheap way to keep the teeth and gums healthy.

Datoun

People in the village often use *datoun*, a 8-10 inches long and small finger thick twig of neem, babool or Karanj etc. This practice is good. After chewing the twig a bit, the end becomes bristly. The bristles can clean gaps between teeth. The medicinal properties of *datoun* keep the gums healthy. *Datoun* should not

be used if there are any ulcers in the mouth. Gargles with lukewarm water are good for mouthwash after meals and particularly after eating sweet foods.

Daily bath

Our culture regards daily bath as a ritual. It is indeed necessary in hot weather as sweating makes us dirty. (In very cold regions one may skip daily baths.) Use water economically. Some people like hot water. Massage with warm sesame or mustard oil is good before bath. Temperature of bath water should be neither too hot nor too cold. After retiring from daily work, we should wash feet, hands and face with water to remove dirt and sweat.

Clean clothes

Clothes with comfortable fitting can be used according to season. Cotton clothes of light colour are more comfortable in summers and warm clothes in winters. Our undergarments and other clothes must be clean to keep away skin infections and louse infestation. A daily change is healthy practice.

Hair care

Combing the hair everyday is necessary for its health. A head-bath is necessary especially if your hair stinks due to sweating. Mixture of *Shikakai*, *Reetha* and *Amla* soaked in water is a simple, cheap and safe way for washing oily and sticky hair. For louse, we need fine combs. Avoid using somebody else's comb as it may have louse.

Footwear

Proper footwear is necessary to keep away germs and worms in the dust from getting onto your feet. Many people walk or children play barefooted in the fields. Sometimes these fields are also used for defecation. The worms present in the faeces may get entry in the body when we walk bare footed. You will learn more about these worms in subsequent books. Dusty and hot weather also cracks our soles. Some people buy shoes, only to use them during festivals or when going out to meet their friends and relatives. This is not good. The Indian custom of keeping footwear outside the house is good. Everyone including children should always wear shoes when going outside their houses. Shoes are necessary for those who get cracked heel.

Think about this:

- Long nails come handy when someone is attacking you physically.
- One can remove food particles in between teeth by needles.
- Lack of privacy for bath is a cause of skin illnesses.



6

Water Safety at Home

**In this lesson we will
learn about**

How water is important for
human health?

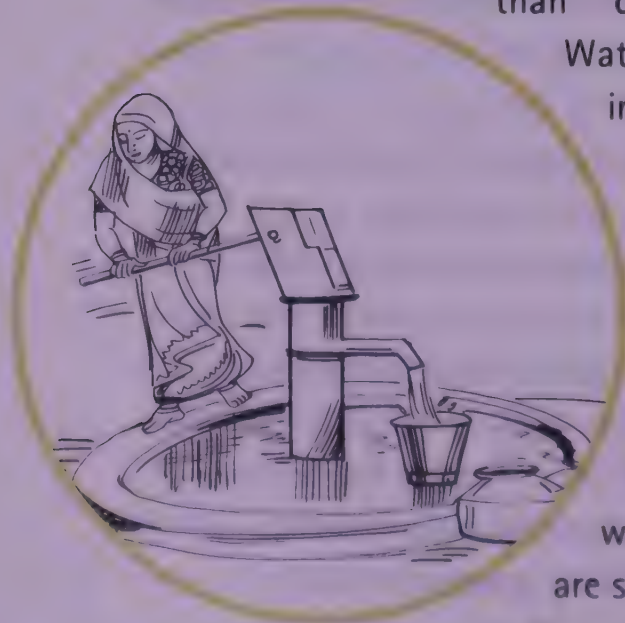
How water becomes unsafe
for drinking?

How to make it safe
at home?

Importance of water in health

Two-thirds of the human body constitutes
water. A child's body has some more water
than old people.

Water is life
indeed. Water



delivers oxygen and nutrients to different parts
of the body and removes toxins and wastes.
Our ancestors have taught us to worship
water sources in the village. Good water is
god. But dirty water can be a demon.

Many illnesses come from consumption of dirty
water. Diarrhoea, dysentery, cholera, jaundice etc
are some such illnesses. Half of illnesses can be due
to dirty water.

How water becomes unsafe

Water becomes bad when disease-causing germs mix in. Germs come from
human and animal excreta. Even minute quantities of excreta can make water
unsafe. You may say that water appears to be clean but there may be deadly germs

inside not visible with naked eyes. So rivers and streams get germs once they pass through human settlements. Water from shallow wells and ponds is also contaminated with germs. Human activity in the vicinity of water sources make these water reservoirs contaminated.

How to make safe water at home

Use only safe sources – a clean hand pump or covered sanitary well or piped water supply. Fetch the water at evening and keep it covered and still overnight. Stale water is safe at least for two days.

If necessary strain the water in a fold of cloth. It will remove bigger particles and some insects. Use a clean *dhoti* or *sari*.

For any turbid water, use alum to settle dirt. For this just dip alum in the water for 2-3 rounds and then keep away.

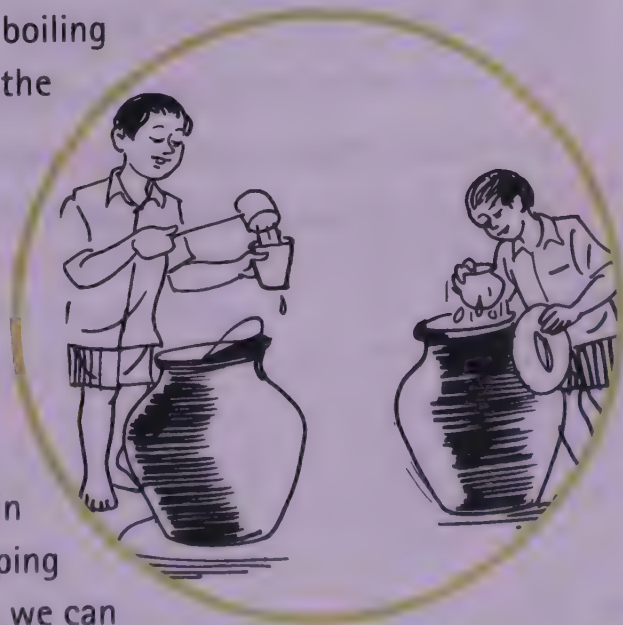
Do not dip hands in the water container. Remember your hands may be dirty. Children are often in the habit of taking water from vessel by dipping their hands especially after play. Use a ladle (handle-cup) instead.

We can also make water safer by boiling it for about 15-20 minutes after the boiling starts.

Chlorine addition is just one way of making water safe. Overnight storage of water makes it practically safe. Boiling is good, but also needs fuel.

If you have chlorine drops, add 2 drops in one bucket. Use this water after keeping half hour. If you have no chlorine drops, we can make a stock solution from bleaching powder.

Take one litre water in a jar. Add a teaspoonful of well-kept bleaching powder to it. Usually bleaching powder is available with MPW or nurse *didi*. Stir it well and keep it still for five minutes. Pour the solution into a plastic bottle using a strainer. Keep off the un-dissolved powder. Cap the bottle and you can use it for 2 days. Take 5 ml (in a big spoon) and add to





one bucket of water and stir it well. Use the water after half an hour. Keep the stock solution well capped. Otherwise the chlorine gas escapes making it useless. All families in neighbourhood can use from same stock solution. In times of outbreaks of water borne diseases, every family should take extra care. Never drink water you are not sure of. Water safety is possible at home, and at the village also.

Think about this:

- Running water is safe and pure. There is no need to make it safe.
- Stale water should be thrown and replaced.
- Hand pump water is always safe.
- Chlorine gives a strong smell to water, so people do not like it.



7

Disposal of Waste Water

Waste water an asset, not a health hazard

Pools and streams of wastewater are a common scene in a village. Nobody likes it. This dirty wastewater is from our baths, kitchens and cattle-shades. Mosquitoes breed in such stagnated pools. They give us sleepless nights and malaria fever. Many deaths occur due to malaria, and many more fall sick and suffer. Malaria fever increases risk of abortions. Some other illnesses also spread due to mosquitoes. We can avoid all this at little cost and effort.

Wastewater pools also stink. They make life difficult for those staying nearby.

It is a hazard for small children. Children can fall in these cesspools and hurt themselves.

We can put the wastewater to good use for a kitchen garden. This will enrich our meals and avoid sleep less nights. If kitchen garden is not possible we can dispose wastewater through a soak pit.

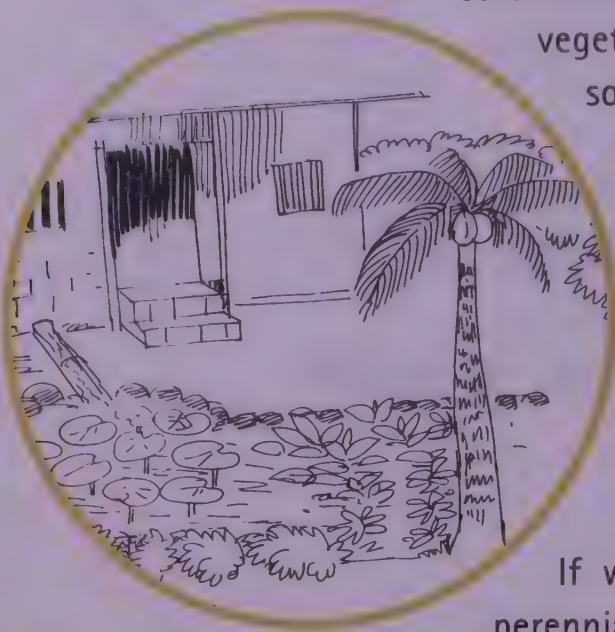
In this lesson we will learn about

How do wastewater pools harm our health? How to dispose wastewater in village so that this is seen an asset and not a health hazard?

Making a kitchen garden and a soak pit.

A Kitchen garden

Kitchen garden is a way to use wastewater to produce vegetables for ourselves. The plants use up the water and we get fresh vegetables at no extra cost. What we need is only some place to do this. The vegetables we can grow are: fenugreek, spinach, *dhaniya*, carrots, tomatoes, gourds, lentils etc. We can have about 20 varieties of vegetables. We should also grow commonly available medicinal herbs such as *Tulsi*, *Kumari*, *Podina* etc along with vegetables for use of common ailments.



If we have more waste water, we can plant perennial trees, fruits and plants like drumstick, mango, guava, lime, papaya and banana. Most people like fruits and we certainly need them for vitamins and minerals.

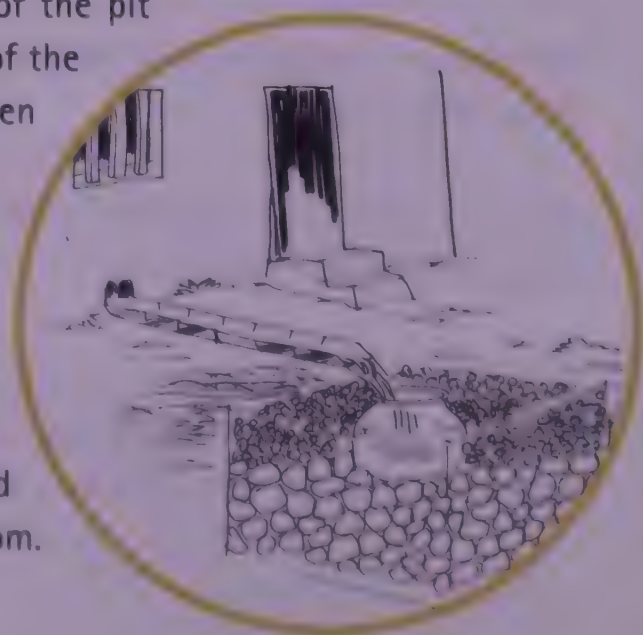
Making a soak pit

Soak pit must be used to avoid pools of water, particularly in the streets and common pathways.

We can construct a soak pit near our house and around public places. This will absorb drumfuls of water without forming a pool. This will avoid breeding places for mosquitoes.

Dig a pit of 1.5 meter length, breadth and depth. At the bottom put loose stones and brickbats. After filling 1/3 of the pit put smaller half size brickbats. Fill 1/3 of the pit thus. Fill the top third of the pit even smaller brickbats.

We need to avoid rain water from entering the pit. For this raise its borders by 10 centimeters above the ground level. Fill it with dry grass or coconut coir on top. Better put a used earthen pot at top, with hole in bottom.



This helps in straining. Connect the wastewater into this pot by using a pipe. Cover entire area with coir. The coir works like a filter. Clean or change the coir every month.

You can learn and teach people by demonstrating a soak pit construction. You may also get more information from Panchayat. Explain to people about nuisance of waste water. Motivate people to develop kitchen garden in their houses. Discuss this issue in the village planning meeting. People can help each other in constructing soak pits.

Think about this:

- Think of a village without pools of stagnated dirty water? Who will help you in making this happen?
- How will you raise awareness on hazards of indiscriminate waste water disposal?



8

Our Health Depends on Food We Eat!

Food: Critical to good health

- We all need to eat enough and good food every day to stay healthy.
- Eating all types of food is necessary for keeping our body fighting fit.
- We need to eat more food when recovering from illness.
- A child needs more food for growth. So do adolescents.
- Heavy work requires more food.
- Men need a little more food for energy in the body than women.
- A woman needs more food in pregnancy and breast feeding. She also needs supplements of iron and calcium.
- Certain foods need to be avoided in certain diseases.
- All grains and cereals are our staple food. They give us most of energy and proteins. But we need to eat enough of these. Similarly non-vegetarian communities take meat and fish.
- Malnutrition contributes to more than half of childhood deaths.

In this lesson we will learn about

The importance of food elements and simple nutrition messages.

Healthy dietary practices

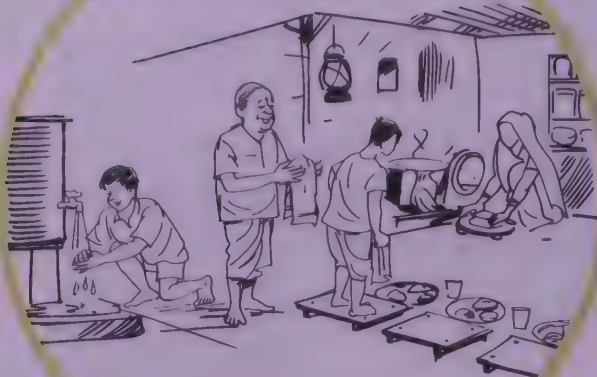
Food items in the meals should have all kinds of tastes. Sweet foods are heavy to digest and hence should be consumed first. Avoid overeating. Always try to eat, when one has an appetite. Do not skip meals for long intervals if there is no medical indication. While eating the simple rule is – do not overfill the stomach, one third of the stomach should remain empty for facilitating proper movements and digestion of food. Do not eat too hot, too cold and too spicy food. Never eat hurriedly. Combination of dal and cereals (like *khichri*) is a healthy practice.

- We should eat thoroughly washed vegetables and fruits as well as cooked meals.
- We should eat sprouted grains as often as possible. Such grains are rich with nutrients.
- Washing and then cutting vegetables saves important vitamins and minerals. If we cut and then wash, these elements are wasted. (Find out the difference yourself. Which process makes the wash-water green?)
- Iron vessels are good for cooking food as they provide iron.
- Use clean utensils for cooking food.
- Covering food while cooking saves some vitamins.
- Fresh cooked food is better than stale food. Avoid storing cooked food and store until next meal.
- Food should be covered to protect from dirt and insects.
- Washing hands before cooking and eating prevents germs entering our bodies.
- Feed children more often, 4-5 times a day. They need to eat frequently. From one year onwards, child can eat from the family pot.

What is a balanced diet?

Food has five basic elements: fats (fats from oils and ghee), proteins (white of egg, pulses-milk) carbohydrates (cereals, sugar, sweets), minerals like calcium or iron, and vitamins. Minerals and vitamins are necessary in minute quantities. You will learn about nutritional values of commonly consumed food.

Food grains like rice, wheat, sorghum, maize, ragi, bajra etc make the bulk of our daily food. They give us energy. Some people think that only rice and wheat are good. The reality is different. *Bajra, ragi, jowar*, maize are not inferior foods. These also rich in nutrients.



Pulses and beans provide body building elements. Meat, eggs, fish and milk and milk products are richer in proteins.

Oils and *ghee* provide lubrication besides extra energy. Children need to eat enough fats. Weight for weight, they give double energy as compared to cereals.

Green leafy vegetables and fruits help in blood formation. Vegetables also give us the fibre (roughage) necessary for normal bowel movements.

Body requires some minerals like calcium, iron, iodine and zinc. Some nutrients called vitamins are necessary in small quantities. Both these are present in vegetables, fruits, sprouts and salts.

You know that drinking water is good for you, but did you know that every systems and organ of body depends on water. Water is essential for all body functions.

Do not

- Do not drain and throw away extra water while cooking rice.
- Do not overcook vegetables.
- Do not over polish rice or remove bran from flour.

Concept of a square meal – A colourful meal

A square meal has many colours.

- The grains are white or brown. Eggs and fish are also white-grey. Milk and curds is white.
- Pulses are yellow. So are fats and some fruits.
- Leafy vegetables are green.
- Fruits are mostly red and orange. So is meat and chicken.



Together they provide all the necessary elements for health. Combination of foods like pulses with grains (*khichdi* is good), and lemon with vegetables improves quality of food. Lemon, guava and Amla increase iron absorption and help make our blood healthy red. Fermentation and sprouting increase vitamins in the food.

Avoid junk foods

Many people like junk foods like cold-drinks, pastries, chocolates, and overfried food items. These are available in many villages and roadside shops now. Haats and fairs also offer such foods. Children and young people take to such fancies. Are they really good?

No, nutritionally they are not good : these are also unnecessary. They may have harmful preservatives in them. The costs are high in comparison to our usual foods e.g. *sattu* made at home. So we have a double loss.

What do you think about this?

- Pregnant women, breast-feeding mothers, growing children and adolescents have special nutritional needs. Do we give them less?
- Cleanliness in food handling and storage is as important.
- Whether a person eats vegetarian or non-vegetarian food, balance in eating all elements is necessary.
- Food fads and taboos can lead to poor health. What are common food fads?
- *Gur-chana, palak, soya, idli-sambar, sattu* are healthy foods.

A healthy person has healthy weight

Our body weight is due to our bones, flesh and blood.

A growing child gains weight regularly. Generally a child triples its birth weight at the age of one year. Adults maintain body weight. Weight reduces in old age.

Underweight is because of under-eating. Majority of village women and young girls have low weight. Poor diet leads to poor growth in children. Several children in our society are malnourished.

Over-eating leads to storage of fat in the body. Fat people can get certain illnesses – high BP, heart attacks, diabetes, joint pains etc.



Hence measuring weight is important

- The child who is not gaining weight or losing weight can be eating less or be a sick child (learn it from Anganwadi *behen*).
- Pregnant woman should gain weight steadily (learn it from nurse *didi*).
- Diseases like TB, AIDS and cancer cause weight loss.

Think about this:

- Some people think it is good to be fat. Others think it is not good.
- Fasting does not kill. Gluttony does.
- Good stamina for work comes from food and exercise.
- A woman's duty is to eat after everyone in the family.
- A pregnant mother should eat less to have a safe childbirth.
- Malnutrition comes from hunger and starvation. But sometimes even rich people are malnourished.



9

Body Mapping and Overview of Organs

Organs and systems

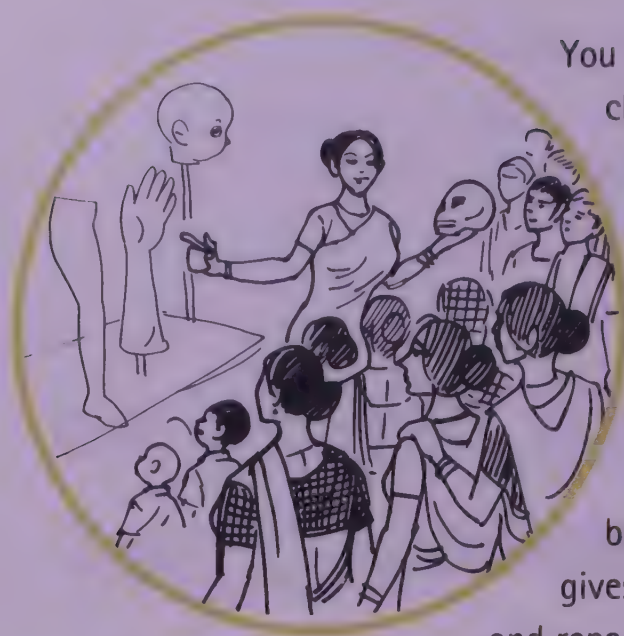
Like we build our house, nature has built our bodies. For a house we need stones, bricks, mud and cement, wood, tins or roof, tiles, pipes and wires etc. From these we build foundation, pillars, walls, rooms, windows, doors, floors, water supply, lighting, kitchen *chulha*, drainage etc. All these parts have different purposes. Similarly in the body we have many parts or organs for different functions. Together they make the human body.

In this lesson we will learn about

Different organs of our body, mapping organs on the body and about which organ does what.

Different organs doing different work are linked together as organ systems. Various systems do various tasks necessary for life. So we have systems for breathing, blood circulation, digestion, movement, waste management etc. And all the body systems work in cooperation. The body has control systems for this, viz brain, nerves and hormones.

Bones and muscles make the frame and walls. This also makes movement possible. Small and big, we have about 206 bones in the body of different shapes. About 100 bones are just in our hands and feet. The joints make movement possible. Hips, knees, shoulder, elbow wrists, ankle are all joints. And joints are so different.



You may have seen the guts of sheep or chicken. Human gut is about 22 ft long—more than a room length. Gut is part of the digestive system and digests/absorbs food. While passing through, food will be mixed with secretions from different glands. It also throws off the waste. Whatever body cannot put to use is sent to the large intestine and later leaves the body through the anal opening. Digestion gives us energy to work and nutrients to build and repair the body.

Respiratory system provides us with oxygen by breathing air. Lungs inside our chest cavity help us in inhalation and exhalation. Impure air is let out. Oxygen is necessary for burning food to produce energy.

We have about 5–6 litres of blood in our body. This goes in rounds thanks to our heart pumping each second. Do you know how much blood the heart pumps in a day? That will fill a water tanker of 10,000 liters in 24 hrs. The heart keeps your blood pumping at all times as it picks up oxygen from your lungs and nutrients from the digestive system and send them to different cells of body. The younger you are the faster is your heart beat. The blood carries nutrients and oxygen. It also picks up wastes from the organs. Blood works like trucks and wagons in the body, through the vessels.

The urinary system throws away urine and cleanses the body. Skin also throws out sweat.

The reproductive system is different in men and women. It helps in reproduction and continuation of life on earth.

We know the world through our five windows. We call them sense organs. The eyes see, ears hear, nose smells, tongue tastes and skin gets touch, pressure, vibration and pain.

Thanks to the nervous system, we respond to these signals. Human brain is most complex object in the world. Thanks to the brain we make necessary movements or change alertness. This is necessary for our survival. The

nervous system controls several body functions. Nerves act as electric wires to control all systems.

Mapping and learning more about our body

Some of our organs are seen from outside like eyes, ears, breasts, testes. Let us see where the other organs are –

Bony skeleton and attached muscles give the body its basic frame. Skin covers all the body and protects it from the outside environment. Soft organs are inside the chest and abdomen. Brain is inside the skull.

A butterfly-like important gland (thyroid) is present in front of the neck. Goitre is actually a swelling of this. Iodized salt prevents it.

When we take a deep breath the chest expands. The lungs inside the chest swell like balloons. The wind pipe in the neck connects the nose throat to the lungs. It indeed looks like an upside down tree, the windpipe in the place of trunk.

Fear or excitement speeds up the heart. Normally heart beats are 72-84 times in a minute. We can feel the beats pounding in the chest. Put an ear to your friend's chest. Can you hear heart beats? Where is it? Heart is just left of the middle of the chest. Pipe like blood vessels connect the heart to the rest of the body. These carry blood from the heart to all parts. Can you see the veins under your skin? Blood is brought back to the heart through veins.

Let us drink a glass of cold water. Do you feel it going down from throat to stomach? Food pipe carries food and drinks to stomach in the middle of upper abdomen. Stomach stores and digests food for 1-2 hours. Then the food passes down the gut.

Do you feel the rumbling in the abdomen when you are hungry? A long coil of gut is in the middle of abdomen. This does further digestion. The long coils lead to a wider short pipe called colon. The well known appendix sits on the colon on the lower right corner. The appendix does not serve any special purpose in the body.

The colon is a bent pipe set against the abdomen walls – going up from lower right side, and then becomes horizontal going left. Then it goes down to the bag storing waste. Finally it reaches the anus.

The liver is high up on the right side. A swollen liver can be felt below the lower right ribs. Similarly on the left side we have a small spleen. In some diseases such as malaria, the spleen becomes very big. We can feel it below the left side ribs.

Two kidneys are filters of blood making urine. They sit on the very back wall of the abdomen. Urine from kidneys reaches urinary bladder through tubes.

One feels tense in the lower abdomen when urine is held for a long time. That is where the urinary bladder is. From the bladder the urine is let out through a single tube opening on genitals.

Reproductive organs are different in men and women

Testes are hanging in a pouch to keep them cool. From the testes two thick cords carry sperm to two small bags close to the urethra. They make semen carrying sperms. The semen is thrown out through the urethra at the end of sexual intercourse.

In women vagina is a passage from private parts to the opening of the uterus. Uterus – the womb – is a small purse with thick walls, hanging upside-down in the lower abdomen. It is protected by the pelvic bones. The womb grows in pregnancy with the growing baby inside. In pregnancy we can feel the womb on the abdomen.

Two egg-tubes are attached to the uterus on both sides. The tubes have free finger – like ends. The fingers catch the eggs released from ovaries. The two ovaries flank the uterus.

Outer parts of genitals are also different in men and women.

In men testes are hanging in a pouch on each side. The urethra opens on the end of a long muscular penis.

In women the urethra and vagina open on the vulva. Inner vulva is soft tags of flesh. These are aptly called inner lips of vulva. The inner lips are connected above at the clitoris. Clitoris is small external bud like organ. A fleshy cushion of vulva–called outer lips protect all these parts.

The vulva completely folds over the vagina in very young girls. Hymen, a thin sheet with holes, covers the vaginal opening. This may be torn after puberty.

After puberty the vulva also opens up baring the clitoris. Breasts also grow in women at the age of maturity.

At maturity both men and women have hair on the genitals.

Many young boys and girls are unawares of these differences. During adolescence their bodies start changing and maturing. They become sensitive to the differences. You will know more about the health needs of the adolescents in subsequent books.

Girls may be embarrassed by the growing breasts and height, and some of them take to stooping posture. Boys often worry about the differences in the size of growing penis. Differences in growing moustache or beard and change in pitch of voice can also bother adolescent boys.

Explain these changes to growing children. With maturation comes the responsibility. Responsible sexual behaviour is necessary for health.

We will learn more about organs and systems when it is pertinent for an illness.

Think about this:

- What are the functions of three openings in women's perineal region?
- Why is the brain the most complex organ of our body?



10

Women and Health

Women and health

Many people in our society consider women as inferior to men. Diseases amongst women and young girls are not taken up seriously.

Women work both at home and outside. Women have to spend considerable time and effort in child care. Fetching water and firewood take many hours of hard work by women. Tedious work at the farm can lead to health problems.

Women work hard but get lower wages.

Women get less food at home. In fact they eat at the end when every one in the family has eaten. Most women are anaemic and weak. Their body weights is too low to be healthy.

Women are given less opportunity for education.

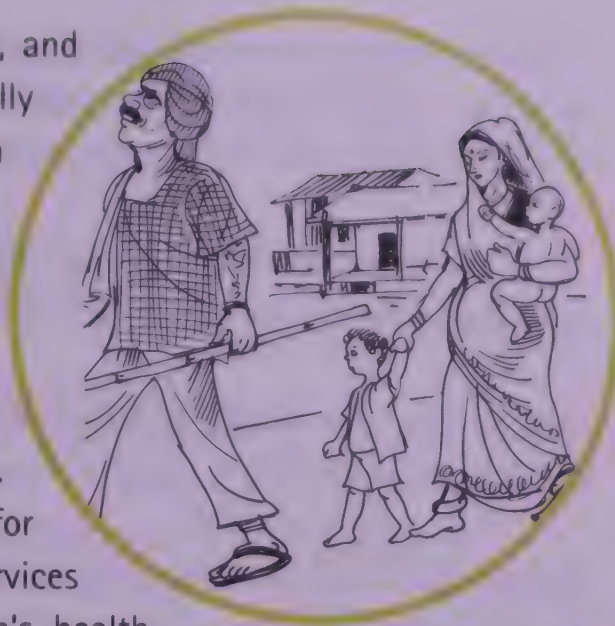
Women have less say in decisions in the family.

In this lesson we will learn about

Why women suffer more ill health and neglect.

Attitudes of society towards women's health.

Many men women treat women badly, and even beat them. Women are also sexually assaulted. Such women suffer from injuries and other health problems.



Women's health problems are often ignored or treated late. They have to get permission from their in-laws or their husband even for health check up. They often have no money to pay for health care on their own. Our health services are also not fully sensitive to women's health care needs.

Infertility can result from health problems, of either husband or wife. But usually it is the woman who gets the blame and is mistreated.

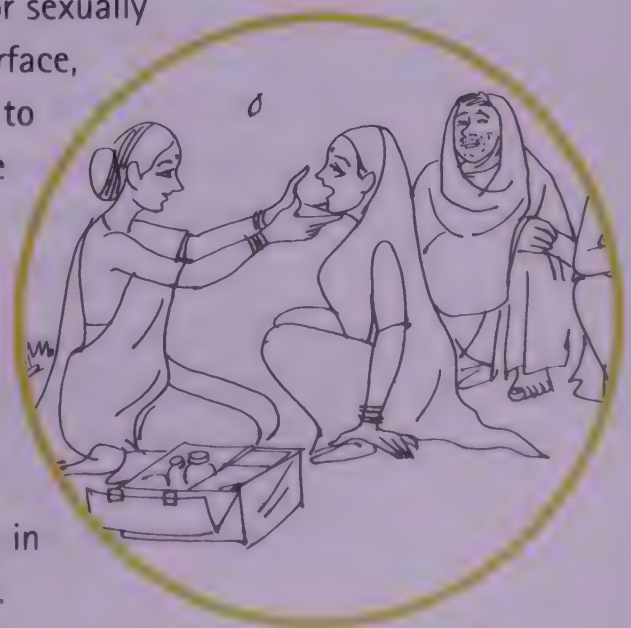
If a woman gets daughters, she gets the blame again. In reality it all depends on the man's sperm. We will learn later to see how the sex of the baby is determined. Many families go for an abortion if it is a girl baby in the womb as they want sons. You can check from your anganwadi *behen* as to how many boys and girls are registered at the anganwadi centre.

Women bear all the trouble of childbirth, abortions. They also bear the burden of preventing pregnancies. Most contraceptive methods are for women and very few for men.

Women's reproductive systems are more vulnerable for sexually transmitted infections. The vagina provides a larger surface, delicate skin, longer time to hold fluids, moistness to make germs stay alive for longer. So they get more infections than men.

Even illnesses affect women differently. Malaria fever can cause abortions and affect the growth of the baby in the womb.

On top of it all, women are married young. They suffer in several ways – socially, economically, and health wise.



Alcoholic husbands exploit women in several ways. They treat their family member harshly every day to show off their manhood. It makes women's already difficult lives all the more miserable.

There are fewer amenities for toilets for women. In the village, they have to go to answer nature's call either early in the morning or evening.

Villages may have no air pollution, but that is not true for women. They work in the kitchen smoke for 4-5 hours everyday. This gives them coughs and headaches.

And do you know, still they are hardy enough to live longer than men. If they get the justice in our families and villages, they will be healthier still.

What we can do

Let women also take part in making decisions in the family and village. They should participate in all meetings. This will make wiser and more practical decisions.

- Discuss with men to share domestic work and child care.
- Encourage women to eat well and take enough rest.
- Encourage girls to go to higher school and learn.
- Try to stop physical or mental abuse of women.
- Do not ignore women's health complaints.
- Raise your boys and girls with equal respect and love.

Think about this:

- Pregnancy and child care can be shared by the couple.
- Is it right to sex-select babies like some people do? Can our world be without women?
- Women and men are born equal. There are many goddesses in our mythology. Then how can we ill-treat and abuse women?
- Why men don't come forward to accept contraception?



11

Organising a Group Meeting

In this lesson we will learn about one way of communication – group meetings. You have to match the group, topic and method of communication. Mismatch of these three will not produce any impact. For instance for bringing behavioural change about sanitary latrine, we need to talk to women (and men).

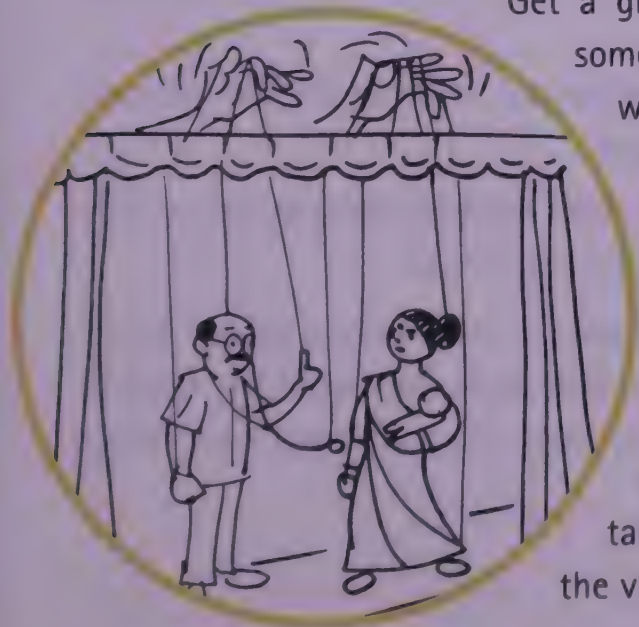
In this lesson we will learn about

How to organize a group meeting.

We can plan and do it as follows:

Get a group of 5-10 women/men (not more) in somebody's house. It is good to select a venue which is accessible to all, especially for women from scheduled castes/tribes. It is useful to select a house, which already have a sanitary latrine.

You need to communicate to people in advance about the venue and timing of this meeting. You can also talk with members of self-help groups in the village.



We can start talking about health hazards and problems due to open air defecation. Just provide the beginning or let someone begin.

Gradually other members of the group will also start participating in the discussion and share their problems.



If we have a model or flip chart about sanitary latrine, we can share it now. If someone in the village has got a sanitary latrine to a smokeless one, that can be a demonstration.

Explain the basics of the sanitary latrine, and how one can make it. A good flip chart will have all that explained in pictures.

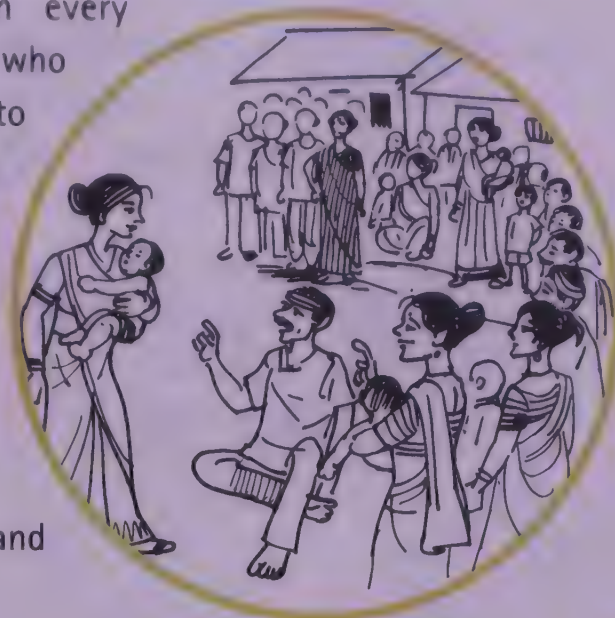
Discuss ways of how the Panchayat can help families in constructing sanitary latrines and what assistance is available.

While conducting a group meeting:

- Set up some ground rules in the beginning. Let one person speak at a time. Talk with participants with full interest and eye contact. You should be convinced of the topic yourself for full confidence.
- Let your audience participate in the discussions. Encourage them to ask questions. Some people will come out with good ideas. Never scold or ridicule anyone. Let things proceed in a democratic manner. Let people suggest solutions.
- Do not open up topics which are ambiguous or difficult. The message should be clear and doable for the group.
- You may not complete the topic in the same meeting. One can follow it up in the next opportunity. But take things a step ahead.
- Communication is effective if we follow our own advice at our home. People learn better with live examples. They learn even better by doing it themselves. Mere talk, pictures, slogans, songs may not work. (These things have a complementary role).

- Do not underplay the complexity of the problem. Problems can be really complex. We need to understand the factors and the interplay. For instance some people say that there is no water to use in a sanitary latrine. Now you have to come up with solutions.

Change may be slow. However in every community there are some innovators who are open to new ideas. You need to encourage them. Sometimes the new generation takes up changes faster than old people. Change is often slow. People cannot give up traditions easily since they find it easy to work with. New things need adjustment.



At the end, sum up the discussion and what was decided in this meeting.

Think about this:

- Some people dominate in group meetings and while some do not speak at all. What should be done?
- I lack confidence while speaking in a group. What should be done?



12

Know Health Services

In this lesson we will learn about

Who are the health workers in the village?

What do we mean by sub centres and PHCs?

Our health workers

Dai: In each village you will come to know about *Dai ma*. There may be more than one *dai ma* in a village. *Dais* assist in child birth, although it is not possible for them to manage women when there are difficulties during child birth. You need to develop a rapport with *dais* in your village. Try to find out from them if they have undergone any training in the past. We will know more about the *Dai* in the following chapter.

Anganwadi Behen: Do you know about the anganwadi *behen* in your village. What are her functions? We will know more about her work in the following chapter.

You will have to work very closely with anganwadi *behen*. One day in each month is observed as "Health Day" at centre. You need to mobilize children, pregnant women for health services offered by nurse *didi* on health day.

Nurse Didi: Where does our nurse *didi* work from? It is a health sub centre. The sub centre actually works for 5-6

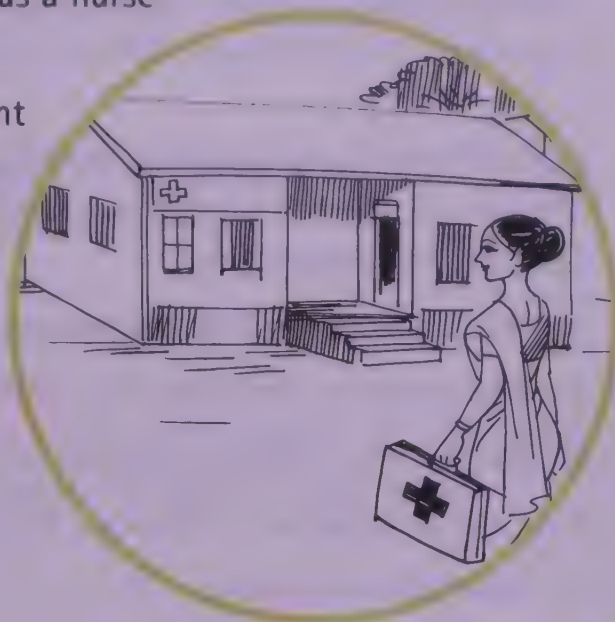


villages (3000-5000 population). We have a nurse *didi* called ANM and a health worker brother called Male Multipurpose Worker (MPW). Together they do various tasks for the villages. We will need to work with them more closely.

The Health Sub Centre

Let us look at our sub centre more closely. The health sub centre may be your nearest health facility. Our sub centre has a nurse *didi* and a MPW. Their main tasks are:

- Immunization of children to prevent six dangerous illnesses. Routine checkup of pregnant women, conducting normal deliveries and post-natal care.
- Helping couples to adopt spacing and sterilization services.
- Treatment for TB, leprosy and malaria.
- Treatment of minor ailments.
- Visiting Anganwadis and schools for health check up.
- Child care including treatment for diarrhoea and coughs.
- Advice on village sanitation, water safety etc.



The ANM and MPW have difficult tasks. The villages under their care spread out on 8-10 km area. They have to often walk distances, and be on the move. They visit houses to provide some services. For some services like Immunization, they conduct clinics on a fixed day each month in a central place such as anganwadi centres in the village. They have also to make reports of monthly health activities and attend meetings at PHCs.

We can do this

Develop good links with nursedidi and MPW. Know about the facilities available with them. Help them in their tasks.

Think about this:

- People say the nurse *didi* hardly stays at one place.
- People call the MPW the malaria worker.
- Village people don't support nurse *didi*, in her work.
- Is nurse *didi* doing only family planning work?

A Primary Health Centre (PHC)

A PHC is usually at some big village in your area. Your block may have 5-10 PHCs. Each PHC has 5-6 sub centres and serves 25,000-30,000 population. Each village falls under one of them. Have you ever been to the PHC?

A PHC has 1-2 doctors, nurses, compounder and other staff. With its 4-6 subcentres the PHC's main activity is for preventing diseases, promoting health and treatment of illnesses. Here are the main activities:

National health programmes related to women and child health, malaria, filariasis, TB, leprosy, blindness, sexually transmitted infections and HIV-AIDS. Some specific activities are:

- Immunization against six diseases.
- Health services for pregnancy, childbirth and after.
- Health check up and treatment of school children.
- Control of disease outbreaks - like diarrhoea.
- Treatment of diseases.
- Birth spacing and sterilization, early and safe abortions.
- Health education to promote health and prevent illnesses.
- Camps for disease detection and treatment, sterilization etc.
- Health care during *haats* and *melas*.
- Medico-legal work.

The PHC doctor has many tasks to do. Treatment of illnesses is just one. He also has meetings to attend and he may also be required to conduct post-mortems.



PHC doctors treat illnesses in the Out Patient Department (OPD). Some patients are admitted in the PHC. Sub centre health workers refer patients to PHC. The PHC may also refer some patients to the CHC or District hospital. Some patients may need to go to the district hospital.

Each PHC doctor also visits sub centres covered by that PHC. Doctor has to supervise work of nurse *didi*, meet villagers and also provide services.

We can do this

Inform people about the facilities available at these health centres. For instance, talk of childbirth or TB treatment and free care.

Motivate people to use available services at the health centres.

Discuss with the doctor or nurse about the health problems of your village community. Inform them about unusual health problems in your village.

Think about this:

- Do people expect free services from a PHC?
- How can we help improve the working of this centre?
- Many people complain about poor quality of drugs offered at PHCs. Is this true?



13

Anganwadi Centre

Anganwadi

The village *anganwadi* is the place where children under six years gather everyday for three-four hours.

The Anganwadi-behen's activities are:

- Weighing children every month and record on a chart.
- If a child is not gaining or losing weight, she tries to help.
- Supplementary feeds for children.
- Offer supplementary food to pregnant mothers too.
- Helping with pre-primary education for children — through stories, pictures, songs etc.
- Advising the mothers about healthy ways of preparing foods.

In this lesson we will learn about

The village *anganwadi* centre.

The services offered through *anganwadi*.

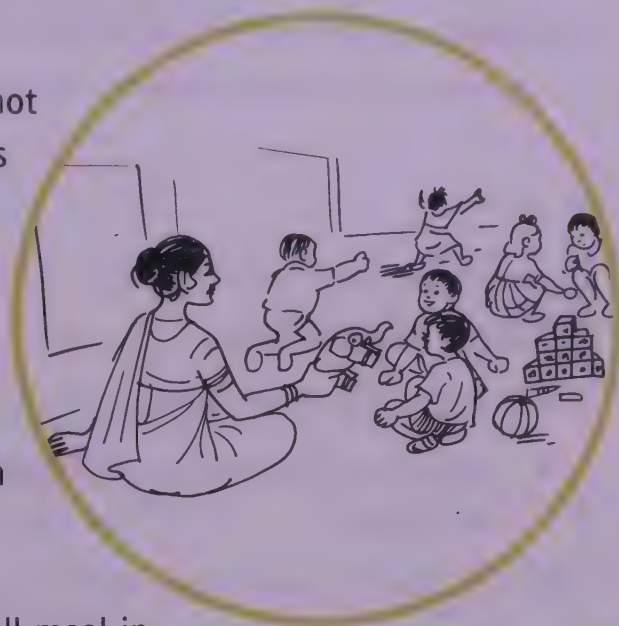
How can ASHA and AWW help each other?

- Getting health check done for the children. The nurse *didi* (and sometimes, doctor) check the children every month. Sick children get medicines. She also refers sick children to doctors.
- Helping in immunization of children.
- Registration of births and deaths at the village Panchayat.
- With the help of *Anganwadi-behen*, we can detect child malnutrition in time and help those suffering with malnutrition.

Anganwadi-behen needs help

You can help her in so many ways.

The babies younger than 3 years cannot come on their own in the AW. Mothers sometimes bring them to AW at mealtime. However, often they are either left at home or taken along to work. Many babies suffer after breastfeeding stops. They remain undernourished. How can we help in this problem?



Parents assume that the child gets a full meal in the Anganwadi, and may give the child less in the home. This makes the supplement less helpful. You need to talk to the child's parents on this.

Some difficulties about regular food supply affect AW services. You can raise these issues during meetings with Panchayat members.

Anganwadi-behen has some records to keep. She is often hard working and gives lot of time for this work. She can be of great help to you in all your work. With her help, you can improve child health services and services for mothers.

She also has some medicines for common illnesses. You can get help from her if you have some medicines in short supply.

Things we can do for improving Anganwadi

- Register all children below 6 years of age at the Anganwadi. Encourage the parents to send their children to Anganwadi regularly once they are registered.
- Help the Anganwadi-*behen* in her activities. Learn the tasks like weighing babies, detecting illnesses mark growth charts and understand if there is weight loss.
- Counsel the mother (and father also) at home, with help of Anganwadi-*behen*. Talk to her about the right feeding of the child.
- Motivate the mothers to get check up done during pregnancy and motivate parents to get their children immunised.

Think about this:

- Some people say Anganwadi is only a feeding centre.
- People complain about quality and quantity of food given to children at centres!
- Do children wash their hands before eating at centres?
- Some children take food back home. This food is shared at home with others. Is this good?
- Many times nurse *didi* does not come on a scheduled health day?



14

Village Birth Attendant or DAI

Dai's work and practices

Dai helps families during childbirth. She is trained by PHC and ANM to observe six cleans:

- A clean place to conduct delivery.
- Clean hands with water and soap before delivery.
- A clean perineum to avoid infection of mother and baby.
- Clean thread to tie the umbilical cord.
- A clean new blade to cut the cord and keep the end clean.
- A clean cloth to wrap the baby.

With this she can ensure the health of the newborn baby and mother. She can save babies with proper baby care. She is also expected to send mothers with difficulties to health centres in time.

Limitations of a Dai

Dais have limited understanding of a difficult birth and risks. Often they refer a mother too late. They need good training to understand impending dangers and refer escorts in good time. Some *village* dais act as a cord cutter only. She

In this lesson we will learn about

The Dai and her work.

The six clean practices in childbirth.

Limitations of Dai.

How we can help and learn from her.

is not very active during after care. This period is important for both the mother and the child.

Often she gets no support from families.

Skilled birth attendant

A skilled birth attendant is one who knows how to conduct deliveries, prevent, diagnosis and manage complications, and refer in childbirth. She can detect dangers soon enough, do necessary things to avoid complications and offer primary treatment like stitching wounds and giving medicines for stopping prolonged bleeding. She is trained and equipped to do this. The nurse *didi* can be a good Skilled Birth attendant. It will be good if families can take the mother to the nearest health centre for childbirth, or the nurse *didi* attend at home.

Things we can do

- Help the *Dai* while she conducts delivery.
- Find out from the *Dai* about pregnant women for ANC services.
- Learn to help her in newborn care.
- Visit the mother with the *Dai* and nurse *didi*.

Think about this:

- Childbirth looks a simple matter, anybody can do it. Nothing can go wrong.
- Old women say they never bothered about childbirth in the past.
- In some villages *dais* are considered as doing some "dirty work"
- Gradually the number of *dais* in villages is going down. Soon there will be no *dais* in villages. We have now fewer *dais* in the village.



15

Illness and Healing

In this lesson we will learn about

What is illness, its causes, germ illnesses, immunity, healing? In this lesson we will learn only about germ illnesses.

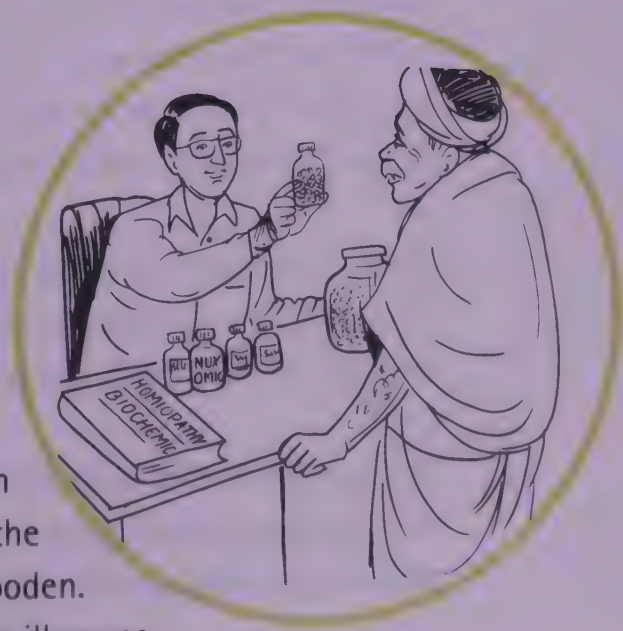
Causes of illnesses

Illness is a loss of health. Often it is temporary as the body heals itself. Sometimes it can be long lasting. Why do we fall ill? Here are some common causes.

- Unsafe water and poor personal hygiene.
- Too little nutrition and too much nutrition.
- Accidents and injury, animal and insect bites.
- Mental tension.
- Changes due to ageing.
- Pollution of air, also noise pollution.
- Unsafe sex.
- Addictions.

Healing

Body has a capacity to heal itself. Have you seen how a tree heals an axe injury? First the gum fills the gap. The gum hardens and gradually becomes wooden. A similar effect occurs in the human body for many illnesses. So you can see a scar replacing an injury or a wound.





Not all illnesses make a scar after injury – common cold, flu, malaria, sore-eyes are some examples. But some illnesses cause a scar inside the body. TB is one example. It leaves a scar in the lungs after cure.

Some illnesses have a cause in the mind – mental illnesses.

Healing is a natural process. Good nutrition and immunity help healing. Healing leads to cure. And most illnesses heal. But some can get worse as they have no cures. Can you name some diseases with no cure?

Germ, worms, insects – illnesses and immunity

Most of the common illnesses are due to germs, small insects and worms. We can often see worms in the excreta. The small insects like louse are visible. The scabies insect is even smaller. Germs are too small to see with the eyes. For this we need a microscope. Have you seen a microscope?

Examples of germ illnesses are: Malaria, chickenpox TB, measles, leprosy, many types of diarrhoeas and dysentery. The gravity and period of illness vary with the germ-type and our resistance to that germ.

Immunity is the resistance of our body to fight germs. Immunity develops as the body gets experience of fighting germs. Immunity helps us recover from a germ-illness. Immunity may be natural as in leprosy. Remember only some people get leprosy, many escape it.

Mother's breast milk gives some immunity to the baby. The first few days the thick milk is a priceless shield for the baby. Sadly, many infants do not get it because of wrong beliefs and practices.

We can also create immunity against some germs. We give babies vaccines to make them stronger against some illnesses. Complete immunization in time to prepare the body to fight against germs of certain diseases.

For many germ illnesses, we use medicines. TB, malaria and leprosy are some illnesses we can cure with medicines.

But some illnesses like hydrophobia; AIDS, etc are without effective cure. These small germs are called viruses. Recently some good medicines have been developed for AIDS, though no permanent cure is possible.

Think about this:

- How can we increase our resistance to illnesses so that we do not fall ill?
- Why we not see small pox these days?
- Do you come across a hydrophobia patient in your village? Why are people so afraid of a dog bite?



16

Using Remedies

In this lesson we will learn about

Different healing systems like the allopathic and Indian System of Medicine (ISM).

Use of select allopathic medicines in primary care.

Abuse of injections and saline, avoiding overuse of medicines.

Different healing systems

Nature heals most illnesses. Our body has such healing properties — like the tree healing itself. We can help the process of healing with medicines. We need good nutrition for that.

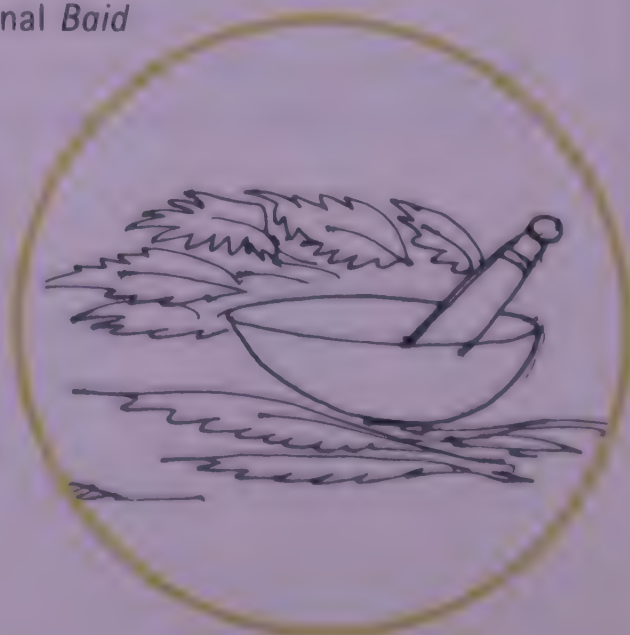
We have many types of healing systems. The *Angreji* system is well known. Ayurveda employs herbal and other medicines. *Sidhaa* is a similar branch. *Unani* is also herbal system. Homoeopathy uses a very small dose of medicine in sugar-based tablets. Naturopathy uses water, mud, diet etc for cures. Yoga also heals some illnesses. In acupressure and

acupuncture, special points on the body are used to cure health problems. In the village the traditional *Baid* uses herbal remedies.

You will learn about some medicines in this programme.

The allopathic system

About 300 allopathic medicines are essential for a hospital. For primary care we need very few medicines.



In this programme you will learn to use some internal medicines/drugs. Paracetamol (para), chloroquine (chloro), Iron Folic acid (ferrous) and ORS. You will learn to use medicines belonging to other systems (*Ayurveda*) later.



The annexure at the end of this book tells you about the use of each drug; dose, how many times to be given, side effects, and precautions. Read carefully before using the drugs.

These medicines are safe, cheap and very effective. They will help us in many illnesses. We will learn about some more medicines in the subsequent books.

Overuse of injections and saline (bottle)

Injections and saline are necessary only in some situations.

Injections and saline used in clinics are not so often necessary. Frequent injections and saline are given for profit and not for cure. False beliefs about injections and saline are rife. We become poorer by paying the hard earned money for many needless injections and saline. We can save these expenses with help of simple remedies and raising health awareness. But peoples' attitudes take time and efforts to change.

Patients are being charged as much as Rs. 50 for one bottle. It is just water and salt and some sugar. If we prepare and drink it at home, the cost is just 50 paise. Its effect by mouth is also equal to saline. Some patients insist on injections and bottles, and doctors also are driven by profit motives. You can educate people about utility/futility of injections and bottles.

Tonics

Tonic bottles are also very popular. Many healers prescribe and patients ask for tonics. Are tonics necessary, do they give us strength as promised?

The answer is NO. No medicine book prescribes tonics. Tonics are just some water, sugar, vitamins and some minerals. The cost is often very high. In the

same cost one can take an egg daily or a glass of milk for a full month. This is a much better buy for the money. Tonics also create a false sense of cure. Many parents want their doctors to prescribe tonics for their children.

You need to educate people on the futility and costs of tonics. It will save people's money being wasted. It will also help them in improving their diet.

Avoid self-medication

Some people buy drugs for illnesses without information. Some people use medicines lying in the house for illnesses. This can be unsafe. Expired medicines can cause health problems.

Avoid overuse of medicines

Medicines are very useful and are life saving at times. Overdose can be harmful, especially in children. Medicines can have side effects too. You should ask your doctors about the dosage schedule of drugs. Inadequate dosage doesn't help. Education about rational drug use in community will help our work. And prevention is better than cure. We need to learn and teach how we can avoid getting illnesses by improving our living conditions.

Think about this:

- Injection and saline is a must for cure.
- Children need tonics for weakness.
- There is pill and injection for every illness.
- People can reduce or increase weight by taking tablets.



17

Home Remedies

Five important medicinal trees and plants

Our country has a very rich source of medicinal plants. We can use these for being healthy and treat ailments at little cost. Some trees in the neighborhood are angels in green. We will learn about just five of them now.

1. Neem (*Azadirachta Indica*)

Neem tree is well known. Its leaves, fruits and outer portion of the stem have medicinal property.



Leaves are used for skin diseases like eczema, infection. The oil prepared with extract of *neem* leaves is useful in itching and wound healing. The decoction of crushed *neem* leaves is also used for the same purpose. *Neem* is a great antiseptic and pest-control medicine. Decoction of the outer portion of its stem is also helpful in various diseases. Therefore, preserve and cultivate *neem* plants.

Making *neem* oil: make 100 ml fresh juice of *neem* leaves. Add 25 cc sesame oil to this. Slowly boil the mixture under cover. The water part will completely

In this lesson we will learn about

Some plants and trees with medicinal use.

Simple home remedies and herbal remedies.



evaporate in half an hour. Cool and filter it. This is *neem* oil for wound care. Keep it in a well-capped bottle. It will stay for one year. Apply this to wounds 2-3 times a day. This heals the wound well.

For childbirth injuries, *neem* water bath is a healing treatment. Crush some leaves of *neem* and put them in warm bath water. Let the mother sit for fifteen minutes in this bath tub.

2. Tulsi (*Oscimun Sanctum*)

Tulsi is a small herb, but having great medicinal properties. *Tulsi* leaves are mainly used for some ailments. They are useful in cough and cold. Give the *tulsi* juice with honey. The leaves are hot in nature, that is they are used in *kafadosha*. The decoction of *tulsi* leaves is also useful for cough. The leaves are chewable.



The seeds of *tulsi* are cold in nature. Hence the seeds are used in heat (*pitta*) disorders like heart burn, bleeding from nose, burning feet, bleeding piles, sore mouth etc. Give the seeds with milk or *ghee*. Soak 20-30 seed grains in water or milk. This is a dose for once. Take it 2-3 times a day.

Take about a cupful of *tulsi* leaves. Soak them in water for five minutes. Then crush them on a stone. Strain in cloth and collect about 20 ml juice (half a cup). Crush more leave if necessary to make 20 ml. This makes 3 doses for one day for an adult. This is good for cold and fever illnesses. Give it for 3 days. For children the dose could be 10 leaves juice, 2-3 times a day.



3. Kumari (*Aleo Vera*)

Kumari (Aloe) is a garden plant. In wounds, we can apply aloe in place of a medicated dressing. Take a piece of aloe about the size of the wound. Cut it into a slice. Clean the wound with water. Apply the aloe slice on it and tie up with a clean cloth bandage. Change

the dressings everyday. It heals faster. It is very useful for burns treatment as dressings.

Kumari is used in several *Ayurvedic* preparations. It is useful for liver disorders and women's illnesses like pain in the periods. It is also used for dandruff and for the growth of hair.

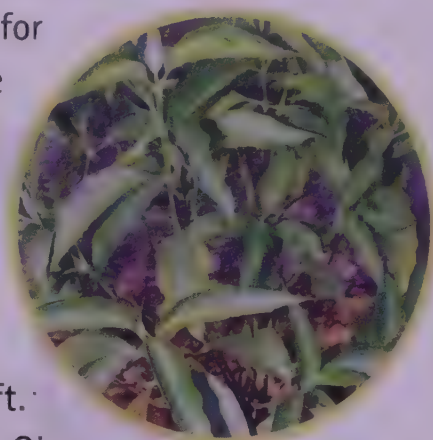
You can grow *kumari* in your garden and ask people to grow in the kitchen garden. It is hardy plant and stays for years.

4. *Adusa (Adhotoda Vacica)*

Adusa is small shrub grown for fencing. It is good remedy for coughs. Use fresh juice or decoction of leaves. Fresh juice of leaves is used with honey. It is useful for bleeding disorders eg. blood in cough, blood in stools, urine etc.

Take 50-60 gms of *adusa* leaves and wash them clean. Slow boil the leaves in one litre of water for half an hour. About one fourth water should be left.

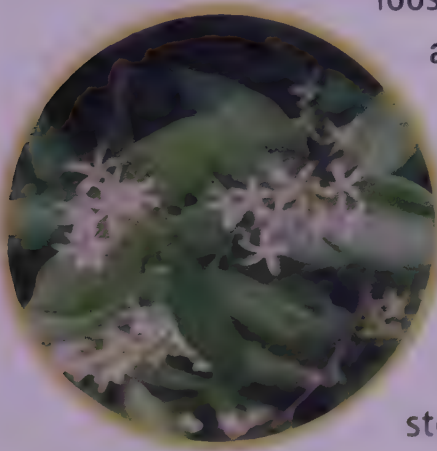
This is *adusa Kawatha* for coughs. Cool and filter it. Give 20 ml once, 2-3 times a day for three days. One can add sugar or honey as per requirement.



5. *Kuda (Holerrhena antidysenterica)*

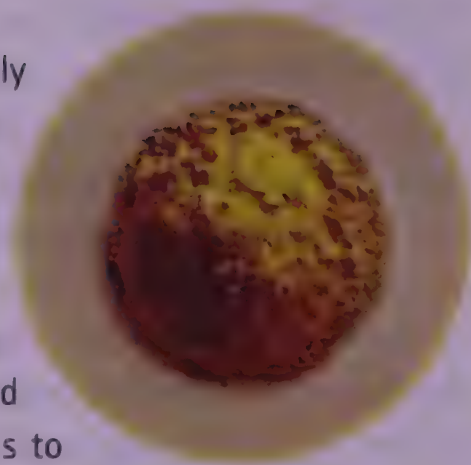
This is a forest tree with typical fruits. The fruit is black in colour when fully ripe. The fruit is like thin doubledrumstick but in twins. The bark or cover of the tree-stem is used for medicine. This is a good medicine for loose motions and dysentery. You can simply grind

a piece of bark and mix with a spoon of honey and give as medicine. *Kadha (Kawatha)* also is useful. For this take a 10 gm (2 teaspoon full) of bark powder, add one glass (200 ml) of water and boil. Boil it till $\frac{1}{4}$ water remains. Cool and bottle it. For an adult 20 ml *kadha (Kawatha)* for 3 times a day is useful to stop dysentery.



Some simple home remedies

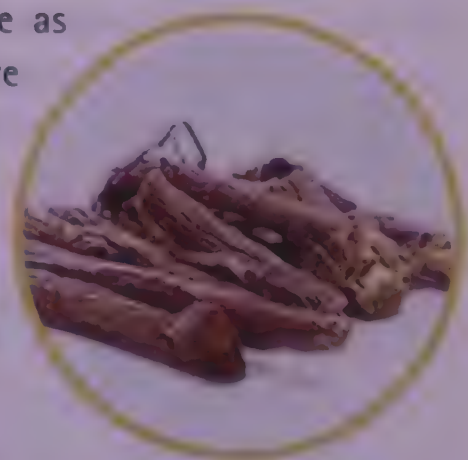
Haldi (turmeric) is a powder of a root. It is widely used in our country in food as spice and as medicine. Its medicinal antiseptic properties have been known for hundreds of years. For bleeding wounds press with *haldi* powder to stop it. Haldi also has great wound healing properties. People use *haldi* with oil for cuts and abrasions. This is a good practice. The practice is to apply it with milk and *chana dal* flour (*besan*) at the time of bath, as UBTAN to improve complexion.



Triphala is a very useful combination of three fruits: *Amla*, *Hirda*, and *Beheda*. We can use the *triphala* powder in constipation. It is useful to reduce obesity and diabetes. Its external application is very useful for healing wounds. *Triphala* powder can be applied on skin at the time of bath. Its decoction is useful for gargling in illnesses such as sore throat, stomatitis, and bleeding gums. *Triphala* powder is also used as tooth powder and vision disorders.

Oil massage is good for pain in the joints. Medicines may still be necessary for joint pains. Sesame oil or coconut oil are considered good for massage. Massage improves blood circulation in the skin.

Mulethi is very a useful plant. It is available as small dry sticks. The stem is used to improve voice if it is hoarse. It is given with honey. *Mulethi* powder is useful in cough and hyper acidity. It improves the brain function when given with cow's milk. It is also used in *pitta* disorders – because *Mulethi* has cooling properties.



Mulethi is used as an external application to improve skin glow. The powder is applied with *haldi* powder and milk.

Mulethi improves general health. It serves as a tonic when taken with *shatavari* (Asparagus) powder and milk especially in lactating mothers.

Amla powder with *ghee* is useful in hyperacidity.

Gulkand (Rose Petal in sugar) + *Ghee* is also useful in heartburn.



Warm/hot water sips help to reduce dry cough.

Lemon juice with sugar & salt helps in diarrhoea.

Honey is good for cough, and is used as a vehicle for medicines.

For gaining weight use milk and *ghee* if is available.

Head massage with oil helps to overcome sleeplessness.

We will learn more on herbal remedies with other illnesses and topics in the next book.

Think about this:

- Herbal remedies are for poor people.
- Herbal remedies take long time to act.
- For herbal treatment, you have to observe many *apathyas* (food not allowed) and *pathyas* (and food allowed) as per our tradition of *Ayurveda* advice.
- Plants have no side effects.



18

Preventing Unwanted Pregnancies

Childbearing affects women's health

Early marriage and teenage pregnancy is damaging to a woman's health in several ways. It leads to abortions, premature births, risky childbirth, small baby, and subsequent effects on the family. It takes away the joy of living, prematurely. Girls tend to drop out from school due to early marriage. We can stop early child marriages by creating awareness in community. Talk about laws against child marriage.

In this lesson we will learn about

The links between childbearing and women's health.

How abortions can also be harmful and can be avoided.

Couples have unmet needs of contraception to meet.

The couple's options deciding number of children needs to be respected.

Repeated pregnancies cause anaemia, cancer cervix and prolapse of uterus. Repeated childbearing causes a woman lot of stress. Her health deteriorates.

Abortions are best avoided, except when essential. We will know about termination of pregnancies in other books. Unsafe abortions through illegal providers (quack or doctor) are riskier than childbirth. Abortions can also cause infection and sterility. In India abortion is legal and can be obtained on specified grounds.

Abortion is available at recognised MTP centres on specified reasons such as danger to life or risk to physical

and mental health of woman, pregnancy on account of rape and when there is a risk that the child may suffer from deformities and diseases.

However, selection of sex of the foetus is illegal and abortion should not be sought for eliminating female foetuses.

Unmet contraceptive needs

Many couples don't want more children. They also want some years gap between children. They are not using contraceptives for various reasons. You can help them in meeting their contraceptive needs. Planned pregnancies and births can add to the joy of life. Couples can plan with the help of safe days and other contraceptive methods. Spacing between two children keeps mother and children healthy.

Contraception methods are available to prevent and space pregnancies. Preventing unwanted births is a right of every woman and couple. We should try and meet this unmet need.

Reversible contraceptive methods

We have temporary (reversible) and permanent contraceptive (sterilization) methods. In the next chapter we will talk about condoms for men.

Use of condom by the husband is the easiest option for spacing between two children. Condom is a rubber balloon available at PHC or SC health workers, or at the common village shops. You will also have condoms in your kits. It prevent entry of seeds present in semen. Condoms also prevent infections in genital tract of women and men. Condoms should be removed carefully after each intercourse to avoid leakage. If not used properly this method may fail.

IUD is a device used for spacing. It is inserted in the uterus. The doctor or nurse puts an IUD in the uterus after proper examination. This method is most reliable. Proper selection of a woman is necessary for IUD. There are other temporary contraceptives available for regulating the interval between two births.

Oral pills: The woman has to take one tablet daily for 28 days. Injectable contraceptives are also available with private practitioners. We will know about these methods soon.

Choices in matters of contraception

Government policy does not promote any specific method for contraception. Each woman and couple has to decide about a particular contraceptive method based on their reproductive intentions and preferences, after analyzing information about contraceptives and matching their own preferences. You can counsel the couples about contraceptive methods.

As ASHA, you should counsel couples about available contraceptive methods. You can also get more information about contraceptives from nurse *didi* and doctor.

Think about this:

- Abortion is good family planning method.
- Decision about family planning method should be left with the nurse *didi*/doctor.
- Government should give incentives for those accepting sterilisation.



19

Condoms: An Option for Men

Use of Condoms

Condoms provide protection against unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS. A new condom is to be used each time during sex. Correct and consistent use of condoms is essential.

In this lesson we will learn about

Condom as a method of dual protection.

How to use condom?

Following steps need to be followed:

- Squeeze the tip of condom and put it at the tip of erect penis.
- Keep squeezing while unrolling the condom until it covers all penis. The loose part at the end will hold semen.
- After the man ejaculates, he should hold firm the rim of the condom and withdraw from the vagina.
- Take off the condom. Tie the other end and do not let the semen spill. Dispose of the condom properly.
- Keep condoms in cool, dry place and away from sun light.
- Help people make individual choices about spacing methods.
- Keep a stock of condoms and show how to use it, and make condoms available.

If the situation is suitable, you can show the couple how condom is used. Use a flip chart and a condom piece. Sometimes you will have to show it to the woman and ask her to share it with the man. You may use a banana (as a penis model) for demonstrating it.

Many brands are available in market. Some brands have a soft grainy surface to enhance pleasure. More expensive brands are also available in different colours and fragrance.

Some myths and misconceptions about condoms need to be answered. The misconceptions are: a) Condoms reduce pleasure of sex b) A condom user is a promiscuous person.

The female condom is now available in cities. With this even women can use a condom. That is helpful when men are unwilling to put on condoms. It empowers women in risky sex situations.

Think about this:

- Free condoms are not of "good" quality.
- Nurse *didi* always talk about sterilizations of women.
- Men can't use condoms properly under the influence of alcohol.



20

Registration of Pregnant Women

Risks & complications in pregnancy

Childbirth is a natural event. However many women can suffer and die due to complications during pregnancy or delivery. Any pregnancy can be dangerous for a mother. We can not foresee all these problems. Treated in time, we can ensure safety of mother and child. Regular check ups during pregnancy are necessary.

Anaemia in pregnant women is a major contributor to mothers' deaths. Half the women have anaemia. Some of them are very pale. Nurse will be able to detect anaemia and provide treatment.

- Swelling of feet, breathlessness, headaches, blurred vision and fits are serious complaints.
- Severe pain in abdomen any time during pregnancy is risky and needs immediate attention.
- Bleeding per vagina any time during pregnancy and after child birth is risky.
- Continuous leaking of fluid from vagina can cause infections and premature birth.

In this lesson we will learn about

What are the major risks in pregnancy?

Why it is necessary to get all pregnant women registered early?

- Very young mother is likely to suffer several problems. She must have her childbirth in the CHC or City Hospital.
- Dangers are present even during childbirth – bleeding, retention of placenta or lack of progress.
- There may be high fever during pregnancy and after child birth.

Why registration?

As said above any pregnancy can end up as a difficult child birth. Hence, it is important that all pregnancies are registered and good care is available to them.

Registration will allow the nurse *didi* to conduct regular checkups and talk to her on issues related to her own health and health of the growing baby inside. Encourage women to register themselves for anti-natal care as soon as they are sure of pregnancy. A pregnancy test is available at the PHC or at other health facilities.

Invariably one day is fixed at each anganwadi centre as health day. You should accompany pregnant women especially from poor sections of the community.

Encourage women to follow advice given by nurse *didi* during pregnancy check ups.

Every woman needs to undergo four checkups during pregnancy.

You have tablets for prevention of anaemia in your drug kit. These tablets can be given to pregnant women, if she has not received it from nurse *didi*.

Think about this:

- Many women feel that pregnancy check up is waste of time.
- Nurse *didi* does not come in time at centre and women have to wait quite long.
- There is no privacy at AWC for abdominal examination.
- Many women go to private doctor for ANC.



21

Janani Suraksha Yojana

Janani Suraksha Yojana

It has been estimated that nearly 1,20,000 women in India die each year due to pregnancy – related complications. Most of these deaths are preventable by timely management of complications during pregnancy, child birth and immediately after birth.

Child birth is safer at a hospital equipped with all facilities to treat complications during pregnancy. Many women deliver at home due to several reasons. Also families find it difficult to arrange merely for transport and buying medicines or pay doctors fee etc.

Government of India has started a new scheme, Janani Suraksha Yojana, for women belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL). Salient features of this scheme are as follows:

Eligibility for JSY and cash awards

Cash assistance to all women belonging to BPL families and attaining 19 years age. Women undergoing third live births are also eligible, provided they undergo sterilisation.

In this lesson we will
learn about

JANANI SURAKSHA YOJANA.

Eligibility criteria for benefits.

Your role in Janani
Suraksha Yojana.

Rs. 700 are to be given to the woman.

Rs. 600 cash assistance will be given to ASHA which will include transport costs and other expenses incurred during her stay with women at hospital.

Your role in Janani Suraksha Yojana

- Identify pregnant women from BPL families and get her registered with nurse *didi*.
- Help pregnant women from poor families and get BPL card from Gram sevak if she does not have it already.
- Help women to receive at least 3 ANC check ups and counsel for hospital delivery. Identify in advance place of delivery.
- Escort the mother to a pre-identified health centre and stay with her, till she is discharged.
- Register birth with Panchayat or inform the nurse *didi*.

Think about this:

- Men usually run away when blood is required to be given to women during delivery through operation.
- In hospital, employees demand money from delivery cases.
- Many poor families don't have BPL card, while others who are well off take advantage of BPL benefits.
- Can women go to private hospitals and they also entitled for benefits under this scheme?



22

HIV and AIDS

HIV is an infection

HIV is a very minute germ. This germ hurts the very human defence system that fights all germs. HIV infection is detected with a blood test. A person having HIV germs in the blood is considered as HIV positive. Infection cannot be identified without a blood test.

The germ HIV is passed on from one to the other person:

- Through unprotected sexual intercourse with a person who is HIV positive.
- Through blood transfusion when blood is taken from HIV positive individual.
- Through contaminated needles used previously in a HIV positive person.
- From HIV positive pregnant woman to child during delivery or afterwards.

HIV is not passed on by

- Touching and kissing a person.
- Just living together.
- Playing, swimming together.
- Using common bathrooms and toilets.

In this lesson we will
learn about

What are HIV and AIDS?
What can we do to prevent
its spread?

Risky sexual behaviour

The main cause of HIV-AIDS spread is risky sexual behaviour. Sex with multiple partners without condom is the risky sexual behaviour. Men having sex with men also exposes them to risk of infection.

The window period

After exposure to risky situations, HIV test will be positive only after 6-12 weeks. This is the window period. So one has to wait for this period to get an HIV test.

In our country more than 85 per cent of HIV transmissions take place through sexual route. There are no "high risk groups" but there are some people who have high risk behaviour. AIDS can strike anybody depending on your behaviour.

AIDS is the illness

AIDS is the illness due to HIV infection. This may take months and years after HIV test is positive. The person is infective in this period. AIDS is a serious disease without permanent cure. But now we have some medicines to reduce its severity. Suggestive symptoms of AIDS:

- Continuous weight loss.
- Persisting diarrhoea.
- Repeated fever illness lasting more than one month.
- The minor features include chronic cough, itching, rash on body and genitals, oral thrush (fungal infection), buboes, and illnesses coming too often.
- There is stigma associated with AIDS often women suffering from AIDS have been abandoned by their families. We can help in removing stigma about AIDS. We can put such patients in touch with support network for HIV positive people.

We can prevent AIDS

Prevention of HIV/AIDS is the only effective way of removing this deadly disease. Following points are important:

Creating awareness in community about risk causation and spread of HIV/AIDS and its seriousness.

Advising men and women to avoid sex with multiple partners.

Consistent and correct use of condoms prevent infection.

In some hospitals we have special services for pregnant women. This involves counselling, blood tests and provision drugs to HIV +Ve mothers. This will reduce the risk of infection to the baby.

Awareness among adolescent boys and girls about healthy family life including sex education is important.

Adolescents should have access to information on AIDS transmission and prevention. Adolescent girls are most vulnerable.

Blood testing facilities are available at most district hospitals. Here blood test for HIV/AIDS is done along with counselling services.

Think about this:

- Prevention is better than cure. HIV and AIDS is an example.
- Should HIV test be done before every marriage?
- Only people in city indulge in having sex with multiple partners.



23

Breast Feeding

Breast feeding – It is important to share this advice with mothers

Immediate breast feeding within half an hour after birth is vital for the baby. It gives baby nutrition and immunity against illnesses. It shrinks the mother's womb and reduces bleeding. Milk flow is better with frequent suckling.

Breast milk is the best food for the baby till 6 months. No other feeds including water are necessary. Consult a nurse *didi* if a mother has any breastfeeding problem even after your help.

Mother's breasts get prepared for producing milk during pregnancy. On delivery the breasts are ready to secrete thick milk called colostrum.

The baby should be fed with colostrum as it protects the baby from germ-attacks. This should not be thrown away.

In this lesson we will learn about

The importance of breastfeeding a baby.

Basics of breastfeeding.

Breast milk provides for all the needs of the baby. It also contains sufficient water for the baby's needs. No need for feeding water separately. More the baby suckles, the more milk is produced.

It protects the baby from getting diarrhoea and pneumonia.

Breastfed babies normally feed every two hours. Well fed babies sleep quietly for 2-3 hours, and gain weight normally.

Breastfeeding postpones mother's menstrual cycle. Hence many of them do not get pregnant soon. You will learn about contraceptive effects of breast feeding in the programme.



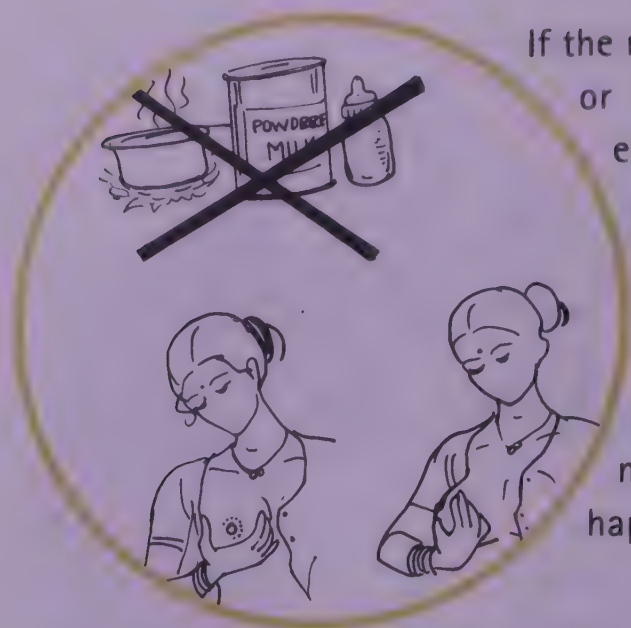
There is help for problems like cracked and sore nipples, painful breasts due to milk hold up. If the nipples are sunken the baby can not suckle well.

Mothers need to be reassured about their breastfeeding abilities and that baby gets adequate nutrition. Breastfeeding can prevent more than 10 lakh child deaths each year. Breastfeeding should be continued whenever possible for at least two years.

Breastfeeding basics-help the mother to breastfeed

- Hold the baby horizontal on the lap or besides if the mother is lying on side.
- Hold the breast at the root of the nipple. Put the baby's mouth to the breast. The baby gets a full hold of the nipple now. This is evident from the baby's upturned lips.
- Make sure the baby's head and body is held facing the breast without turn and twist.
- Support the whole baby.
- Clean the nipple after the baby leaves the breast.
- Change the side for the next feed.
- Give breast feeding on demand.





If the mother has pain while breast feeding or has sore or cracked nipples or engorgement, take the help of anganwadi *didi*.

Some mothers get dribbling from the other breast if the baby is on one breast. But this is not a rule. No need to worry if dribbling is happening or not.

Think about this:

- Often a baby is breastfed only after the third day. This starves the baby and affects the milk flow.
- Pre-lacteal foods are given to many new born babies. Are these any good?
- Many babies are breast fed for 3 years.
- Many mothers are not sure if her baby is being fed adequately and hence they resort to top feeding.



24

Infant Nutrition

Feeding recommendations

Age: Up to 6 months

Give exclusive breast feeding.

This means that the child should not be given anything else by mouth not even water.

Remember that no extra water is required for an exclusively breast fed baby even if the weather outside is very hot. There is

always enough water in breast

milk to protect the baby from getting dehydrated.

Up to 6 Months of Age



Breastfeed as often as the child wants, day and night, at least 8 times in 24 hours.

Do not give any other foods or fluids not even water

Remember:

Continue breastfeeding if the child is sick

In this lesson we will learn about

Feeding recommendations.

Foods for the baby after six months of exclusive breastfeeding.

Breast feed the baby as often as the baby wants.

The baby should be breast fed even at night.

Most babies need to be fed at least 8 times during a day.

Do not give water, food or other fluids for any reason unless advised specially by a health personnel.

6 Months up to 12 Months

Breastfeed as often as the child wants.

Give one *katori* serving* at a time of :



Mashed roti/rice/bread/ biscuit mixed in sweetened undiluted milk OR

Mashed roti/rice/bread mixed in thick dal with added *ghee*/oil or *khichri* with added oil/*ghee*. Add cooked vegetables also in the servings OR

Sevian/dalia/halwa/kheer prepared in milk or any cereal porridge cooked in milk OR

Mashed boiled/fried potatoes or give one banana/ cheeko/mango.

*3 times per day if breastfed;
5 times per day if not breastfed.

Remember:

Keep the child in your lap and feed with your own hands

Wash your own and child's hands with soap and water every time before feeding

Age: 6 months up to 12 months

The child should continue to be breast fed during this age. Breast feed as often as the child wants. The first foods given to the baby in addition to breast milk are called complementary foods.

If the child is breast fed then give complementary foods at least 3 times in the day. If not breast fed the complementary foods should be given 5 times in the day.

A child who is not breast fed may be given animal milk undiluted by a cup.

Never use a feeding bottle.

The child should be actively fed.

The mother should be present when the child is getting the complementary foods. The portion for the child should be separate from that of other family members. After the child has finished eating, some food should be left over in the plate/bowl.

Some other tips

While feeding with spoon place it

on the middle

of tongue to avoid spitting by the baby.

Cleanliness has to be maintained while preparing the food of baby. Maternal hygiene needs to be promoted.



* A good daily diet should be adequate in quantity and include an energy-rich food (for example, thick cereal porridge with added oil); meat, fish, eggs, or pulses; and fruits and vegetables. Egg is a good snack where culturally acceptable.

Some home recipes for child feeding children

Rice and *dal Khichdi* with ghee or oil–

Porridge – semolina (*suji / rawa*), *singhada*, *Ragi* flour, Hyderabad mix (preparation of Hyderabad mix – one *katori* rice, half *katori chana dal*, one-fourth *katori* ground nut to be roasted and powdered.)

Cooked vegetables – spinach, pumpkin, carrots, potato, beans, tomato

Fruit pulp of banana, papaya, apple, chikku, and mango

Think about this:

- Many parents give top feed only after the baby is 1 year old.
- Girl babies get less attention and feeds from male children.
- Who feeds children when parents go to work?



25

Immunization

In this lesson we will learn about

Vaccines for six dangerous illnesses of childhood.

Importance of Vit A doses.

To convince parents to take their children for immunization.

We should know this

Many serious germ diseases in children can be prevented by immunization vaccines

BCG prevents Lung TB.

OPV (Polio dose) prevents Polio.

DPT protects the child from Diphtheria, whooping cough and Tetanus.

Measles vaccine prevents measles.

These vaccines are given free to all children by the nurse *didi* in your village. They are also given at the sub-centres and the PHC.

Vaccines need cold storage during transportation to retain their power.



Child gets fever after DPT injections. This can be treated with 'Paracetamol' tablet or liquid.

BCG is usually injected on the baby's left shoulder. A scar is formed six weeks after injection. It shows that the child may have become immune to Lung TB.



Give also five doses of vitamin A. Start from nine months age, and give every six months. This protects children from night blindness. Vit A also boosts child's immunity against germs.

We all know that many parents deny their children immunization. Immunization boosts body's fighting power against diseases caused by germs. You can help them by explaining benefits of immunization. Accompany them during immunization services in village.

Schedule for immunization & Vit A

Name of vaccine	When to give
BCG	At birth or any time up to one year
Polio - 0	At birth (if delivery is in institution)
Polio - 1+DPT	6 weeks
Polio - 2+DPT	10 weeks
Polio - 3+DPT	14 weeks
Measles+ Vit A (1ml)	Nine months
1st Booster DPT & Polio +Vit A 2ml	18 months
Vit A 2ml	24 months
Vit A 2ml	30 months
Vit A 2ml	36 months
If a child is not given the right vaccines in time, get them started whenever possible and complete the primary immunization before child reaches first birthday.	

Make sure

Immunization card is given for each child by the health worker and is to be kept safely for further follow up. The child gets full immunization in time. Parents should bring the child for immunization as per schedule. Only complete immunization protects the child fully. Partial immunization does not protect and gives false sense of protection.



Some people have misconceptions about immunization. You need to dispel these. For instance some people feel that immunization is harmful to babies. Or it causes fever and therefore illness. Another misconception is that immunization should not be done if the child is sick. Ask your nurse *didi* about questions raised by the parents about immunization.

Think about this:

- People feel that quality of vaccines offered in villages is not good.
- Some people feel that despite complete immunization children get Polio?



26

Diarrhoea

Why does diarrhoea occur?

Many children get diarrhoea in your village. One or two may have even died due to the illness. Germs are the main cause of childhood diarrhoea. These germs come from unsafe drinking water, unclean feeding practices, bottle feeds etc. We can avoid these problems with help of families and the village community.

What happens to child with diarrhoea?

Water makes up to 72-75 per cent of children's body weight. That makes life possible. What if we lose even some water? Think of a plant without water. We have a pretty flower plant in our house. We forgot to water the plant. We know what would happen to it!

Water loss can be fatal. Whatever the germ of diarrhoea, the dehydration is the cause of deaths. You have to act in time. Let us understand the stages of water loss.

Rehydration

Treatment of diarrhoea is very easy and quite effective. The principle is to prevent dehydration (loose motions may not stop for 2-3 days). Water needs to be restored quickly. Continue feeding. If child is breast feeding, it should continue.

In this lesson we will learn about

What causes diarrhoea.

How diarrhoea can be fatal?

How severe is the dehydration.

How can we save such children at home?

Diarrhoea

Two of the following signs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lethargic or unconscious • Sunken eyes • Not able to drink or drinking poorly • Skin pinch goes back very slowly. 	SEVERE DEHYDRATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer URGENTLY to hospital with mother giving frequent sips of ORS on the way.
Two of the following signs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restless, irritable • Sunken eyes • Drinks eagerly, thirsty • Skin pinch goes back slowly. 	SOME DEHYDRATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give fluid and food for some dehydration (Plan B) under supervision. • Follow-up in 2 days if not improving, refer.
Not enough signs to classify as some or severe dehydration.	NO DEHYDRATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give fluid and food to treat diarrhoea at home (Plan A). • Follow-up in 2 days if not improving.

Treat diarrhoea with dehydration with Oral Rehydration Salt (ORS) Solution (Plan B)

The child with diarrhoea of less than 14 days duration who has signs of some dehydration should be treated under your supervision with ORS for 4 hours. For this, keep the mother and child under observation, either at the health centre or at the home of the child. You may like to attend the baby at home. If supervision is not possible then refer.

Teach the mother how to prepare ORS

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- Pour all the ORS powder from a packet into a clean container.
- *Pour all ORS powder from the packet.*
- Measure one litre of clean drinking water and pour it in the container in which you poured ORS.
- Stir until all the powder in the container has been mixed with water and none is remaining at the bottom of the container.
- *Mix until all ORS powder is fully dissolved.*

Ask the mother to give one teaspoon of the solution to the child. This should be repeated every 1-2 minutes (An older child who can drink in sips should be given one sip every 1-2 minutes).

If the child vomits the ORS tell the mother to wait for 10 minutes and resume giving the ORS but this time more slowly than before. Breast fed babies should

be continued to be given breast milk in between ORS. Any ORS which is left over after 24 hours should be thrown away.

Use the table below to determine the amount of ORS that should be given to the child in 4 hours.

ORS	AGE			
	Up to 4 months	4 months up to 12 months	12 months up to 2 years	2 years up to 5 years
Cups	2	3	5	7

After about 4 hours of giving ORS, reassess the child for dehydration. If the child is no longer dehydrated, tell the mother to give home available fluids the same way as she gave ORS. Details of what home available fluids to give are given in the next section. Begin feeding the child even if dehydration persists, continue ORS. If the child is still dehydrated, refer. On the way mother should continue to give ORS to the child.

Home care for the child with diarrhoea and no dehydration (Plan A)

Home care for treatment of diarrhoea and no dehydration includes the following:

The child should be given extra fluids to drink

Advise the mother to give home available fluids. Some examples of useful and harmful home available fluids are given in the table below:

Useful	Harmful
Breast Milk Yoghurt drink Lemon drink Rice, Water 'Dal' (lentil) Vegetable soup Fresh Fruit Juice (unsweetened) Plain clean water	Soft drinks Fruit juices (sweetened) Coffee

How much extra to give

AGE		
Up to 2 months	2 months up to 2 years	2 years and more
5 SPOONS	1/4 - 1/2 cup	1/2 - 1 cup
Give more if the child wants		

Continue feeding

The child should continue to be fed as much as the child would take. If the child is reluctant to eat then feed more often than before smaller amounts of food. As soon as the child recovers, the child's appetite would return and the mother should feed extra foods to make up for the excessive losses during the disease.

Advise the mother when to return

The signs that she must look for are:

- Child becomes sicker;
- Not able to drink or breast feed,
- Blood in stool;
- Drinking poorly.
- Develops a fever.

How to prevent diarrhoea?

To prevent diarrhoea keep the home and its surroundings clean. Prepare the food in clean vessels and store in clean conditions. Do not allow house flies to breed in neighbouring places. Wash hands before eating and after defecation with soap and water. Never use food that is going spoilt. Summer season hastens spoiling of food. A thumb rule, use freshly prepared food and within one hour.

We can do this

- Identify children with diarrhoea.
- Know the signs of dehydration.
- Learn to prepare ORS at home.
- Refer or accompany the child to hospital if seriously ill.
- Discuss with people about cleanliness of home, while cooking and storing foods.
- Discuss with them about not to stop feeding babies who have diarrhoea.
- Discuss with them about futility of injections, unless really needed.

Think about this:

- By knowing how to treat diarrhoea you can save children's death.
- Each child with diarrhoea needs bottles. Do you agree?
- How houseflies transmit germs of diarrhoea?
- Young children put every thing inside the mouth and this leads to diarrhoea.



27

Aches and Pain

Aches, pains, body pains and internal pains

Aches and pain is one of the most common complaints. It is a signal that something is wrong inside the body or particular part having aches.

Ache is a mild pain and we know of body ache, headache, backache etc.

We can group pains and aches related to head, skin, muscles, bones, and joints, limbs etc as 'body pains'. Generally these are easy to treat.

The pains related to inside organs of chest, and abdomens are internal pains. You will refer all these problems to the doctor. We will learn about them in the next book.

We describe various types of pains: Cutting, burning, pricking, stabbing, writhing, twisting, squeezing, throbbing, splitting, bursting, dragging, etc. These pains are specific to organs and underlying diseases.

Many illnesses cause various pains. We can often find out an inner illness from the pain it causes. Heart attack, stomach ulcer, urinary stone, appendicitis,

In this lesson we will learn about

What are aches and pains?

About body pains and internal pains.

How to treat body aches and pains.

menstrual pain, fractures etc are some examples. Pains associated with concerns are also common.

Pain relief

Pain is only a symptom of some illness inside. We need to find out the illness and treat it whenever possible. Many drugs are available for pain relief. For relief of internal pain organ-specific remedies are available. Here we will see only about body aches and pains.

Headache, backache, body aches are often relieved with simple Paracetamol tablet. For its dose please see last section.

Ayurveda suggests gentle oil massage for body aches and backaches.

Acupressure suggests pressure points for many types of aches and pains.

Drinking a lot of water can relieve burning pain occurring while passing urine.

Good rest and sound sleep often relieve headaches and body aches.

Refer to a hospital

- Any pain with convulsion
- Chest or abdomen pain
- Headache with neck stiffness
- Headache of only half of head
- Any pain associated with burn injury and in joints.

Think about this:

- Is injection the best remedy for pains of all types?
- People have less tolerance of pain these days than before.
- Many people take liquor and *bhang*-like substances for pain relief.
- Some faith healers in villages try different rituals. Are these rituals any good?



28

TB

Understanding about tuberculosis

A minute germ causes TB. It spreads from one person to the other through breath. A TB patient's sputum has thousands of TB germs. Also while coughing or sneezing the germs spread in the air. The germs also stay in dust for long and affect people. TB germs enter the lungs of nearby persons. In a weak person the germs survive and produce an illness. It may take months to recover.

In this lesson we will learn about

Cause of Tuberculosis.

Suspecting Tuberculosis.

Referral to health facility for diagnosis and treatment.

TB can affect any part of our body. But Chest TB is the most important. It spreads from one person to the other through air.



TB is a serious illness. Any one, rich or poor, adults' male or female and children can suffer from TB. Lack of nutrition, weak immunity, overcrowding and poor living conditions etc. help Tuberculosis spread.

We have good drugs for TB today compared to what we had before.

Suspecting TB

A person suffering from TB has one or more of these symptoms:

- The most common symptom of TB is a cough lasting 3 or more weeks.
- Sputum in cough.
- Evening fever with sweating.
- The patient may also have chest pain.
- Coughing up blood (Bloodspit).

However, the following four points are important for suspected TB cases.

- Diagnosis needs checking patient's sputum under microscope.
- Escort the patient to the nearest CHC/PHC, where facilities are available.
- No fees are charged for any tests or the treatment.
- AIDS patients can also have TB.

Cure for TB

Very effective cure for TB is available. One has to take the medicines in front of the ANM or MPW or any health provider. This is called directly observed treatment (DOT). The improvement occurs in a few weeks. However, the full treatment takes 6 to 8 months in most cases. Our rule is to make the patient complete the full treatment. You can also be a provider for DOTs treatment to TB patients in your village. Try to get more information about DOTs treatment from nurse *didi* or male worker. During treatment the sputum is tested periodically for germs of TB. Remember that services are available free!

Some precautions

- One should cover the mouth with handkerchief while coughing and sneezing. This halts spread of germs.
- One should take the medicines regularly. Keep a follow up for this.
- Persons having TB should avoid close contact with young children.
- Children should get BCG vaccine in time that prevents serious forms of TB.

We can do this

Find persons who may be suffering from TB. Look who is getting cough for more than 3 weeks. Take the person to health centre for sputum test. Tell TB patients to take medicines regularly. Encourage them to complete the treatment. Tell people all tests and treatment is free at all government hospitals. Even private doctors can arrange DOTS treatment.

Inform people that BCG vaccine prevents TB. All children should get BCG vaccine as per national schedule.

Educate patients to cover their mouth while coughing and sneezing. Also tell them not to spit here and there.

Think about this:

- Some people say TB is an incurable disease.
- TB patients must eat eggs every day to recover.
- Why some patients of TB stop treatment before completion?
- Why patients go to private doctors though government gives free treatment?
- Many TB patients don't like to take anti-TB drugs due to side effects.



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Snake Bite

Some useful information

Most snakebites are non-poisonous. Snakebites are common in rainy seasons and night hours.

Two-fang marks are typical of a poisonous snakebite. Look for fang marks. It is easy to know the 4 common poisonous snakes. Cobra, krait, big viper and the small viper are the four main harmful snakes.

In this lesson we will learn about

How to identify poisonous bite.

What is the correct first aid for snakebite?

Effective and quick first aid can save most patients. No magic or temple prayers can undo the poison bites. The 90% cases are saved because the bite was non-poisonous. Panic can also kill.

Drooping eyes or bleeding are first signs of poison.

Drooping eyelids or sleepiness point to cobra and krait bites.

Bleeding from bite, gums, urine, in vomit means viper bite.

First aid in any snake bite

Reassure the person and the family. Tell them it may be non-poisonous. Make the person lie down and relax. Do not make patient walk. In case of non-poisonous snake bite, it's enough to clean and disinfect the wound.

Tie the entire limb with an elastic bandage. This slows blood flow from the limb. Then tie a stick to the limb to lessen movement.

Shift to the nearest hospital. Keep looking for poison signs of drooping or bleeding. Take along the snake if it is brought killed. This helps in treatment. Now specific anti-snake venous infections are available. You should know about the hospitals where anti-snake venom drugs are available in your area.

Many people kill snakes indiscriminately. This is not good. Snakes eat rodents which causes loss of our food grains. And many of them are non-poisonous.

Don'ts

- Do not waste valuable time in a temple or with a Tantrik. Remember even some Tantriks have died due to snakebite.
- Do not tie a tourniquet (single band string as was practiced till sometime ago). This causes the bite to bleed and may also stop blood flow to the limb. More than 2 hours to tight tourniquet can cause blackening and then loss of the limb.
- Do not kill and waste chickens as some villagers do to treat snake bite.

Think about this:

- Some people kill every snake they see.
- Snakes eat up rats and save our food grain.
- Snakes remember and identify a person.
- Snakes also take revenge.
- Snakes guard some treasures hidden underground.

Drug kit to be used for first learning exposure¹

Medicines	Action & use	Dose	Side Effects
Paracetamol	Reduces fever and pain: useful in fever, headaches, backaches, body aches etc.	More than 12 years: 1 to 2 tablet 3 to 4 times a day	No side effects. If taken too many tablets at one time, it can cause damage to liver. Keep the medicine away from children. Should be taken only after meals.
		8 to 12 years: 1 tablet 3 to 4 times a day	
		4 to 8 years: ½ tablet 3 to 4 times a day	
		Less than 4 years: ¼ tablet 4 times a day. Crushed in honey	
* Chloroquine Tablet	<div> <div>■</div> <div>Fever with chills</div> </div> <div> <div>■</div> <div>Malaria fever</div> </div>	More than 14 years: 4 tablets	May cause nausea, vomiting or giddiness. Can be given to a pregnant woman. Keep the medicine away from children.
		9 to 14 years: 3 tablet	
		5 to 8 years: 2 tablet	
		1- 4 years: 1 tablet	
Iron Tablets (adult)	<div> <div>■</div> <div>Prevention of anaemia</div> </div>	2 tablets daily for 100 days; for prevention of anaemia, one Tablet for 100 days	Should be taken after meals. Can cause stomach upset. Stool (motions) may be hard and black.
ORS packet	Replaces salt and water in our body	As required. In adults: Half a glass with every stool. In child: 1 teaspoon after every stool.	Throw ORS solution after 24 hours. Make it fresh. Do not use a packet if it is like a cake.
* Gentian Violet liquid	Kills many germs	For application on wound, inside mouth, vagina etc	Stains clothes. Let is dry before putting on clothes.
* Antiseptic lotion	Kills wound germs	Only for external use, wound wash etc	Make very dilute solution. 2 drops in 1 cup of water. May sometimes cause irritation.

* These and some more medicines will be covered in the next book.

¹ For Ayurvedic and herbal remedies, see section on Ayush



